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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the evaluation of the on-the-job performance of school district superintendents as they implement school board policy. It draws from the results of a federally supported project on improvement of administrator performance evaluation. Following an overview of the paper's objectives and rationale, part 1 offers a brief history of the superintendency, its duties, competencies, and requirements. Part 2 presents basic concepts for developing a superintendent performance-evaluation model, outlining tasks in the personnel evaluation process. The main models used to evaluate superintendents' performance are assessed in the third part. Part 4 provides a draft of an improved evaluation model based on communication between the board and administrator and on sound conceptualizations of the superintendent's duties. The final part discusses implementing the model within normal school-year calendars. Thirteen figures are included. Contains 51 references. (LMI)

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EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE: TOWARD A GENERAL MODEL

by

Daniel L. Stufflebeam
The Evaluation Center
Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation
Western Michigan University
April 5, 1994

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EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE: TOWARD A GENERAL MODEL[1,2,3]

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The Evaluation Center
Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation
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[1] Partial financial support for developing this paper was provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) through its grant to Western Michigan University for the work of the national research and development center called Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE). The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the positions of OERI and the U.S. Department of Education.

[2] This paper was prepared for a special invitational symposium presented in New Orleans on April 5, 1994, during the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. The symposium was organized by Dr. Andrew McConney and included this paper plus others on new models for teacher evaluation by Dr. Michael Scriven, support personnel evaluation by Dr. James Stronge, and school evaluation by Dr. William Webster. The purpose of the symposium was to engage leading evaluation theoreticians and practitioners in examining and discussing CREATE's progress toward developing a unified model of educational personnel evaluation.

[3] This paper is based on the work of CREATE's *Administrator Evaluation Models Project.* The author of this paper, director of the involved project, is especially indebted to the other project team members, Dr. Carl Candoli and Ms. Karen Cullen, for their collaboration in developing the concepts on which the paper is based. Special appreciation is also extended to Drs. Arlen Gullickson, Andrew McConney, Michael Scriven, James Stronge, and William Webster for their critical reactions to a previous draft of the paper. Finally, the development of the paper was aided by the inputs to the underlying CREATE project by project advisors: Dr. Edwin Bridges, Dr. Patricia First, and Dr. Jason Millman.

[4] Appreciation is expressed to Sally Veeder for her excellent editorial assistance and to Patricia Evans, Elissa Joan, Mary Ramlow, Rebecca Thomas, and Susan Stafford for their technical production of the included charts.

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OVERVIEW OF THE PAPER

School district superintendents, the chief executive officers of boards of education throughout the U.S., play a crucial leadership role in the education of America's children and youth. To help assure effective implementation of this role, evaluations are conducted during several stages of a superintendent's career: namely, to determine whether or not the applicant has the prerequisite experience and aptitude to succeed in a superintendent preparation program; once graduated from the program, to determine if the candidate has developed sufficient competence to be certified or licensed for service as a superintendent; to establish whether or not a certified superintendent has the special qualifications to succeed in a particular position; once employed, to gauge how well the superintendent is fulfilling job performance requirements; and to identify highly meritorious service and accomplishments that deserve special recognition.

This paper focuses on the evaluation of the on-the-job performance of school district superintendents as they implement school board policy. The decision to focus on performance evaluation is due to its relative importance in the national movement to raise educational standards and improve educational accountability in U.S. schools. Also, the paper draws directly from the results of a federally supported project on improvement of administrator performance evaluation. This project has been funded over the past 18 months by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), as part of OERI's support of the Western Michigan University-based Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE).

Objectives of the Paper

This paper has five main objectives:

1. To provide a general concept of the superintendency that can undergird development of a model to guide evaluations of superintendent performance

2. To identify basic concepts, drawn from the literature of evaluation, for use in developing a sound model for superintendent performance evaluation

3. To identify, characterize, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the main models currently used to evaluate the performance of U.S. school district superintendents

4. To use what is learned in addressing each of the preceding objectives to outline a new and better superintendent performance evaluation model

5. To describe how boards of education can implement the new model

The pursuit of these objectives has been a joint venture by Carl Candoli, Karen Cullen, Jason Millman, and myself, with the support of Edwin Bridges, Patricia First, and Gary Wegenke. I am indebted to these named colleagues for their excellent contributions to the ideas presented in this paper, but absolve them of responsibility for any ambiguities or other deficiencies in the paper.

Rationale for the Underlying Research and Development

The need for improved models of superintendent evaluation was extensively examined in the CREATE monograph by Candoli, Cullen, and Stufflebeam (1994) entitled *Superintendent Performance Evaluation: The State of the Art*[5]. Based on the monograph and especially the excellent literature review by Karen Cullen, the following points summarize the case for conducting high quality evaluations of superintendents plus resources for improving upon present superintendent performance evaluation models:

The extent and frequency of superintendent evaluations

1. Evaluation systems are both needed and identifiable for four major stages in a school superintendent's or other educational administrator's career: entry into preparation, licensing, practice, and professionalization.

2. The vast majority of superintendents (nearly 80 percent) are evaluated annually, a small number (around 7 percent) are evaluated semiannually, and in a few districts (several hundred) the superintendent is never evaluated (Bippus, 1985;

[5] Copies of an examination draft of the Superintendent Performance Evaluation: The State of the Art (Candoli, Cullen, & Stufflebeam, 1994) monograph can be obtained for $15.00 each by contacting the CREATE office at The Evaluation Center; Western Michigan University; Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5178 (616-387-5895).

Calzi & Heller, 1989; Dickinson, 1980; Foldesey, 1989; Lindgren, 1985; New Jersey School Boards Association, 1987).

3. A broad range of purposes for superintendent performance evaluation are identified in the literature (American Association of School Administrators & the National School Boards Association, 1980; Bickers, 1990; Bippus, 1985; Candoli, 1986; Dickinson, 1980; Glass, 1992; Hall & Difford, 1992; Hord, 1992; Lindgren, 1985; MacPhail-Wilcox & Forbes, 1990; National School Boards Association, 1980; New Jersey School Boards Association, 1987; Robinson & Bickers, 1990; Texas Education Agency, 1990):

To improve educational performance

To improve superintendent/board communication

To clarify the roles of the superintendent and the board

To improve board/superintendent relations

To inform the superintendent of the board's expectations

To improve planning

To aid in the professional development of the superintendent

As a basis for personnel decisions

As an accountability mechanism

To fulfill legal requirements

4. Nationwide surveys (Edington & Enger, 1992; Glass, 1992; Robinson & Bickers, 1990) reveal that superintendent perceptions of the major purposes of evaluation are, in order of priority:

As an accountability mechanism

To establish performance goals

To assess performance with standards

To identify areas needing improvement

However, these findings differ from more localized statewide surveys (Dillon & Halliwell, 1991).

5. The Dillon and Halliwell (1991) study also found that superintendents and boards may differ substantially in their perceptions of the use of evaluation to improve the instructional leadership role of the superintendent.

The criteria used to evaluate superintendents and the persons who establish the criteria

6. The vast majority of superintendents (nearly 88 percent) have job descriptions, although only little more than half are evaluated according to the criteria specified in the job description (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982; Glass, 1992).

7. Criteria for evaluating superintendent performance are divided into main types: traits, processes, and outcomes (MacPhail-Wilcox & Forbes, 1990); qualities, inputs, and outputs (Candoli, 1986); traits, characteristics, and skills (Lindgren, 1985).

8. In the light of public demand for student outcome measures to be included in the evaluation of educational professionals, researchers are working to develop techniques for validly including such data (Millman & Sykes, 1992; Sanders & Horn, 1993; Webster & Edwards, 1993; Webster, Mendro, & Almaguer, 1993).

9. The criteria most frequently identified as having a high degree of importance in evaluating superintendent performance are "board/superintendent relationships," "general effectiveness of performance," and "budget development and implementation" (Glass, 1992; Robinson & Bickers, 1990).

10. There is conflicting evidence about the number of superintendents who agree upon their evaluation criteria with the members of the board; estimates range from 18 percent (Glass, 1992) to 46 percent (Edington & Enger, 1992) to 66 percent (Robinson & Bickers, 1990).

The methods used to evaluate superintendents

11. The most commonly used methods are printed forms, in particular, rating scales and checklists (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Edington & Enger, 1992; Glass, 1992;

Robinson & Bickers) and discussion among board members without the superintendent present. Written comments or essays and observation are also frequently used (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Edington & Enger, 1992).

12. For nearly half of superintendents, their evaluation is discussed with them at a meeting of the board and superintendent (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Glass, 1992), although surveys are in less agreement on how widespread are the use of such discussions.

13. There is concern about a lack of objectivity in some of the methods used to evaluate superintendents (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Glass, 1992).

14. There is a need for technically sound, widely available evaluation instruments that may be adapted to the particular circumstances of the school district (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Lindgren, 1985; New Jersey School Boards Association, 1987).

The models used to evaluate superintendent performance

15. The project identified 12 models currently in use to evaluate superintendent performance; these can be grouped according to 3 major orientations: global judgment, judgment driven by criteria, and judgment driven by data.

16. None of the models is strong when assessed against the requirements of the Joint Committee *Personnel Evaluation Standards*.

17. The group of models driven by concern for criteria tended to show the most promise, with the strongest models in the group being the Duties-Based Model and the Printed Rating Forms Model.

The persons who conduct superintendent evaluations and their preparation for doing so

18. The overwhelming majority of superintendents (more than 90 percent) are evaluated by the members of the board, often with input from the superintendent (Anderson & Lavid, 1992; Edington & Enger, 1992; Robinson & Bickers, 1990).

19. Evidence suggests that school board members may not be adequately prepared for evaluating superintendents (Dillon & Halliwell, 1991).

The involvement of other stakeholder groups

20. Input from other stakeholder groups, such as peers, subordinates, constituents, teachers, and students is solicited in no more than 10 percent of school districts (Glass, 1992; Robinson & Bickers, 1990).

The importance of superintendent performance evaluation

21. In general, boards and superintendents perceive performance evaluations as contributing to the overall effectiveness of the superintendency and the school system (Anderson & Lavid, 1988; Robinson & Bickers, 1990).

In addition to the clear need to improve superintendent performance evaluation, there is a growing foundation on which to improve superintendent performance evaluation:

1. The field of educational evaluation has reached widespread agreement, through the work of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1988), on the basic requirements for sound evaluation of educational personnel.

2. Scriven has made a strong philosophical case in the literature (1993) for grounding evaluations in the generic duties of particular professional groups, as opposed to the styles with which individual professionals carry out duties. Duties are defined in this paper as "obligatory tasks, conduct, service, or functions enjoined by order, ethical code, or usage according to rank, occupation, or profession."

3. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) *Professional Standards for the Superintendency* (1993) define the knowledge and skills that should form the basis of superintendent preparation, certification, and professional development. These competencies represent a working consensus with potential utility for assessing

superintendent performance, although the critically important stakeholder group of the National School Boards Association apparently was not party to the consensus.

4. Although only little more than half of superintendents are evaluated according to the criteria specified in the job description, the fact that about 87 percent of them have job descriptions is an resource on which to build. Other sources of evaluation criteria include state certification requirements and laws, school board policies, the superintendent's job contract, and district goals.

5. The recent advances in developing models for evaluating educational personnel (Iwanicki, 1992; Scriven, 1994; Stronge & Helm, 1991; Stufflebeam, 1993) reveal commonality on the generic evaluation tasks.

6. Webster (1993) demonstrated that educational evaluations increase in utility and influence when consumers and school professionals are involved in defining evaluation criteria, as through the standing accountability commission used in the Dallas Independent School District. The need for a sound communication base for evaluation systems is articulated by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1981, 1988) and by Stronge and Helm (1991).

7. Last but not least, there is widespread dissatisfaction among the public and school professionals concerning evaluations of school professionals, schools, and programs. The time is right for researchers to assist schools to improve their evaluation procedures.

Given the preceding lists of points concerning needs and opportunities for improving superintendent performance evaluation, the remainder of this paper is organized into five parts to respond to each of the paper's five objectives.

1. THE SUPERINTENDENCY[6]

Clearly, a model for evaluating superintendent performance should be grounded in a sound conceptualization of the superintendency. At a minimum, such a conceptualization should define the essence of the superintendency; should define its historic functions; should define its essential duties; should outline the competencies required to fulfill the duties; and should reveal the general process of activities during a superintendent's work year. This section presents an abbreviated version of the conceptualization of the superintendency that has guided the underlying project.

Significant Historical Events

The U.S. superintendency traces its history to the late 1700s and early 1800s. With the growth of cities and the corresponding expansion of public school systems during that era, boards of education recognized that they needed specialized help in directing and supervising their schools. By the early 1800s, boards in several major cities had explored the appointment of an educator to head the public school system. Then, in 1837, the common council of Buffalo, New York, appointed a superintendent of common schools; and in July of that year, Louisville, Kentucky, appointed a superintendent of public schools.

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[6] Dr. Carl Candoli contributed useful oral and written material for this section. The concept of the superintendency presented in this section reflects Dr. Candoli's rich experience as professor of educational administration at The Ohio State University; superintendent of the Lansing, Michigan, and Fort Worth, Texas, school districts; chairman of the department of educational administration at the University of Kansas; and deputy commissioner of education in charge of accountability for the Texas Education Agency.

The famous Kalamazoo case in 1874 established the right of local school boards to tax property owners for support of secondary as well as elementary education. This stimulated the expansion of public high schools across the U.S., which brought additional pressure for school systems to appoint a single top administrator.

The Role of the Superintendent

The role of superintendent has evolved from that of keeper of schools, with the board making almost all policy and administrative decisions of importance, to that of chief executive officer. In the latter role, the superintendent provides professional guidance to the board for policy development and is charged and authorized to make the decisions necessary to implement board policy. By the end of the 19th century, most superintendents had shed the role of schoolmaster, without decision authority, to become the managing administrator responsible for the day-to-day running of the school district.

Early superintendents were pioneers in reforming schools and in training future school leaders for the task. By reflecting on their practical experience and studying general theories and practices in leadership and management, they have contributed a succession of theories of school leadership. In general, these conceptual contributions have mirrored approaches to leadership and management in commercial and sometimes military organizations. The theory of organizations and their management has progressed through a number of stages: "scientific management"; the "human relations" approach; "behavioral school" of management; the "systems approach"; and, most recently, a mix of "total quality," "outcomes-based education," and "campus-based management" orientations. Change has continued apace since the 1950s, particularly following

consolidation of school districts, the civil upheaval and social tension of the 1960s and 1970s, and the financial crises of the 1980s.

The position of superintendent of schools has become a vastly different and much more complex leadership post. The modern day superintendent must be effective in dealing with at least the following stakeholder groups: the federal, state, and local courts; the local board of education; teacher and other personnel unions; the press and other public media; the school district's professional staff; the students and parent groups; the area universities; the state department of education; public and private funding agencies; a wide range of vendors; professional groups in education; and the local community. Clearly, the superintendency has become one of the most complex and challenging leadership roles in American society.

A typical modern-day description of the superintendent's role might be as follows:

> **The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the school system. He/she is appointed by and directly responsible to the board of education for discharge of assigned responsibilities. The superintendent acts in accordance with the policies, rules, and regulations established by the board and the laws and regulations of the state and federal government. The administration of the entire school system is delegated to the superintendent.**

In comparison to the role of superintendent, the board is the publicly accountable policy-developing body and the governance authority for the school district. Within the structure of state statutes, the board alone has responsibility for setting policy; interpreting the needs of

students, staff, and patrons of the district; and establishing the school system's governance mechanisms. The superintendent serves at the pleasure of the board.

Entry Requirements

Entry into the superintendency has typically been through a state-administered credentialing process. Criteria and procedures for this process vary from state to state. Usually, certification in the field of educational administration requires teaching experience and at least a masters degree. Sometimes state certification is waived, so that accomplished administrators from outside education can be appointed as school superintendents. Such cases are infrequent, and the experience to date does not argue strongly for or against such alternative certification.

Duties of the Superintendent

Pursuant to the preceding conceptualization of the role of the superintendent, the project being reported on attempted to clarify the duties of the superintendent as the basis for defining and applying criteria for evaluating superintendent performance. The identified duties were derived from work conducted by the author in the 1990s with the Texas Education Agency and have been refined through a variety of reviews. The identified generic duties are as follows:

1. To promote and support **student growth and development**
2. To honor diversity and promote **equality of opportunity**
3. To foster a positive **school climate**
4. To provide leadership in **school improvement** efforts

5. To stimulate, focus, and support **improvement of instruction**

6. To lead and manage **personnel** effectively

7. To manage **administrative, fiscal, and facilities functions** effectively

8. To promote and support positive **student conduct**

9. To foster effective **school-community relations**

10. To foster **professional development** of school personnel

11. To relate effectively to the **school board**

Competencies Needed to Carry Out Superintendent Duties

In 1993, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) published the *AASA Professional Standards for the Superintendency*. The standards were developed through consultation with a national "Jury of 100" comprising multiple stakeholders and members of professional organizations. These standards define what the superintendent should know and be able to do in eight areas, which correlate quite closely with the preceding list of duties:

1. Leadership and District Culture

2. Policy and Governance

3. Communications and Community Relations

4. Organizational Management

5. Curriculum Planning and Development

6. Instructional Management

7. Human Resources Management

8. Values and Ethics of Leadership

The involved consultants reportedly agreed that the defined standards of knowledge and skills should form the basis of superintendent preparation, certification, and professional development.

It is important to distinguish such knowledge and skills from the duties to be carried out on a day-to-day basis. Whereas the competencies are useful for guiding evaluations for certification and professional development, they are not necessarily adequate for evaluating performance. While the competencies denote what a superintendent should be able to do if and when any of a wide range of performance issues arise, performance evaluations must be keyed to fulfillment of explicit actual performance expectations. These can be quite different from the expansive AASA list of competencies, especially as to relative emphasis. In a particular superintendency and particular year, some of the AASA knowledge and skills categories might or might not come into play. School boards are advised to consult both the duties listed above and the AASA competency standards in the course of determining the particular duties and associated competencies to be referenced in evaluating the superintendent's performance in a given year.

Superintendent/Board Interactions and Information Requirements

Any new model for superintendent performance evaluation should be designed, as much as possible, to fit into the normal course of board/superintendent interactions during the school year and to provide the needed feedback in a timely manner. A new model that requires a substantial set of additional superintendent/board meetings beyond those regularly scheduled likely will be judged too demanding of time and not used. Also, if a new model provides evaluative feedback after, rather than before or on, the occasion for pertinent decisions, the information, no matter how technically impressive, will probably have little if any impact. In addition, it will be critical not to set up the new model as a system by which the board micromanages the superintendent's work, as this could impede, rather than enhance, superintendent leadership. Thus, it will be critically important to key the new model as much as possible to the reality of

board/superintendent interactions, schedules, and information requirements; to keep it flexible so that it can be adapted to particular situations; and to assure that it does not distort the roles of superintendent and board. In general, the new model should enhance functional, evaluation-oriented communication and collaboration between board and superintendent.

It is obvious that formative evaluation of the superintendent's work should be conducted early in the school year to provide guidance for improved performance. However, it is not so obvious that summative evaluation should be provided at the end of the school year. In some school districts decisions based on summative evaluation, including whether or not to continue the superintendent's appointment, must, according to contract, be made as early as February.

A good starting point for deciding how to adapt a superintendent evaluation model for a particular setting is to review the schedule and nature of regular meetings between board and superintendent. Using this information the evaluation activities can be integrated as much as possible into the agendas for those meetings. Also, the contents and timing of both formative and summative evaluation reports can be planned to meet predictable evaluation feedback needs of both the board and superintendent. In many districts, the board and superintendent meet monthly. Every such meeting is an opportunity for the board to review and evaluate the superintendent's performance.

2. BASIC CONCEPTS FOR DEVELOPING A SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION MODEL

The quest to develop any sound personnel evaluation model essentially involves the development and application of an evaluation theory, i.e., a coherent set of philosophical, conceptual, hypothetical, and pragmatic principles forming a general frame of reference to guide inquiry into the evaluation practices of interest. The purpose of this section is to outline the rudiments of a theory of superintendent performance evaluation. The model for evaluating superintendent performance presented in Section 4 and elaborated in Section 5 builds heavily on the concepts presented in this section.

Specifically, this section presents conceptions of

Professional standards for sound personnel evaluation (to serve as the philosophical base for the new model)

Key concepts of educational evaluation (to provide the conceptual building blocks for the new model)

Overall model of educational personnel evaluation (showing the complexity of educational personnel evaluation)

Steps in the evaluation process (to provide the basis for determining evaluation procedures and scheduling the evaluation work)

The Personnel Evaluation Standards

The Personnel Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee, 1988) were developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, which included representatives from 14 major professional associations concerned with education. The Committee studied evaluation practices and models and obtained input from educators to develop the *Standards*, which were reviewed by experts and field tested before being published in 1988. The standards are grounded in general principles that cut across different models of evaluation. The standards are intended to assist educators in developing, assessing, adapting, and improving systems for evaluating educational personnel.

The standards posit four basic values for evaluation work: propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy. Each of these values is defined by several standards. Each standard is explicated with definitions of its key concepts, the rationale for its inclusion, the common errors associated with the standard that must be avoided, and the practical guidelines for meeting the requirements of the standard. Essentially, the write-up of each standard is a set of working hypotheses about what mistakes and good practices are associated respectively with failing or succeeding in getting a good performance on the dependent variable, which is the principle embodied in the standard. Across all of the standards, the Joint Committee posited that if good practices are followed (as defined in the guidelines) and errors are avoided (as defined in the common errors), then the 21 standards will be met and a professionally respectable evaluation will be accomplished.

The Personnel Evaluation Standards can quite easily be seen as a working theory of how to design and conduct evaluations that evidence propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy. In toto,

the *Standards* book provides a working theory of educational personnel evaluation, including philosophical, conceptual, hypothetical, and pragmatic principles forming a general framework for studying, practicing, and assessing educational personnel evaluation. The four basic values are the undergirding philosophical principles, and the 21 associated standards provide the main conceptual principles. The guidelines and common errors linked to each standard provide the working hypotheses about what has to be done and what has to be avoided to accomplish a sound evaluation. The guidelines also provide the pragmatic principles to help guide the design and implementation of evaluations. Taken together, the basic values, associated standards, guidelines, and common errors provide a general framework for studying the field of educational personnel evaluation, hence a basic theory of educational evaluation.

Listed below are the four main categories of *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*.

Propriety standards require that evaluations be conducted legally, ethically, and with due consideration for the welfare of the evaluatees and of the clients of the evaluation. The five Propriety standards are Service Orientation, Formal Evaluation Guidelines, Conflict of Interest, Access to Personnel Evaluation Reports, and Interaction with Evaluatees.

Utility standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they are informative, timely, and influential. There are five Utility standards: Constructive Orientation, Defined Uses, Evaluator Credibility, Functional Reporting, and Follow-up and Impact.

Feasibility standards call for evaluation systems that are as easy to implement as possible, efficient in their use of time and resources, adequately funded, and viable from a number

of other standpoints. The three Feasibility standards are Practical Procedures, Political Viability, and Fiscal Viability.

Accuracy standards require that the obtained information be technically accurate and that conclusions be linked logically to the data. The eight Accuracy standards are Defined Role, Work Environment, Documentation of Procedures, Valid Measurement, Reliable Measurement, Systematic Data Control, Bias Control, and Monitoring Evaluation Systems.

Key Concepts from Educational Evaluation Models

The new model for improved superintendent performance evaluation will be grounded first and foremost in the Joint Committee standards. The standards provide the criteria for evaluating the new evaluation model and the quality of evaluations conducted through use of the model.

In addition, this study of superintendent performance evaluation is grounded in well-established concepts from the literature of educational evaluation, including evaluation's definition, goal, roles, purpose, process, key criteria, and main classes of information.

Evaluation Defined. In accordance with the definition adopted by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1988), evaluation is defined as the systematic process of assessing the merit and/or worth of something, e.g., a person's qualifications or performance in a given superintendency. This definition has wide acceptance. It is consistent with definitions of evaluation found in standard dictionaries.

The Goal of Evaluation. In accordance with the seminal 1967 contribution of CREATE researcher, Michael Scriven, the goal of evaluation is always the same: to assess something's value, i.e., its merit and/or worth. In evaluating a superintendent's performance, it is not enough to describe it. The performance must also be judged against appropriate criteria.

Roles of Evaluation. Furthermore, Cronbach (1963) and Scriven (1967) both noted that the roles of evaluation may vary. For example, the board might use evaluation of a superintendent's performance to help clarify her/his duties, provide guidance for professional development, make a salary decision, or make a continuation/termination decision. Scriven recommended that assessments of something's value be termed *formative* if the intent is to help improve the object while it is being developed or implemented, or *summative* if the intent is to determine its value following development or implementation. In the case of superintendent performance evaluation, the board could employ formative evaluation to help the superintendent adjust and improve services during the year, and summative evaluation to determine a salary increment at the end of the year.

The position taken here is that the most important purpose of evaluation in education is not to prove but to improve. Educational evaluations are not academic exercises. They are done in the interest of providing better service to students. Evaluation can serve this purpose both by providing educators with formative feedback for improving their service and by providing authority figures with summative assessments for use in retaining a competent superintendent or replacing an incompetent one.

Merit and Worth. Two other terms introduced by Scriven are incorporated into the model development work here. Merit means assessing excellence in terms of something's *intrinsic* qualities; for example, how competent is the superintendent and how well does he or she carry out board-assigned responsibilities?

Worth means assessing something's *extrinsic* value; e.g., is the continued employment of the current superintendent justified in terms of both the need for a full-time leader and the cost of employing the particular superintendent? If the judgment of worth is not strong, alternative ways of implementing the functions of the superintendency might include the following: replacing the incumbent with an equally competent, but lower cost superintendent; contracting, at a reduced cost, with a management firm to perform the superintendency's functions; or eliminating the position of superintendent and assigning the leadership functions to another school district staff member, e.g., in a very small district, the high school principal.

The superintendent and the board need to consider issues of both merit and worth when they reach an agreement on the employment contract and the terms for termination, including severance pay. Such contracts should protect the interests of both the superintendent and the school district. In general, the superintendency is judged as essential and thus worthy. However, in some districts this judgment may be questionable and subject to a worth evaluation.

The Process of Evaluation. Drawing from the work of Stufflebeam et al. (1971), the process of evaluation is more or less cyclical and includes four main tasks. We define them here as: (1) *delineating* the information to be obtained and processed, (2) *obtaining* the information, (3) *reporting* the information to the rightful audiences, and (4) *applying* the information to

improvement steps, personnel decisions, and other uses. In planning and implementing an evaluation, it is necessary to define and schedule appropriate procedures and provide training related to all four tasks.

Categories of Information. In general, the information required to evaluate educational enterprises can be broken down into four categories: context, input, process, and product information. These are the categories of the CIPP Model, first introduced by the author as a guide to evaluating War on Poverty programs (Stufflebeam, 1966; 1967; 1983; Stufflebeam et al., 1971). This model has been widely used in program evaluation throughout the world. The model also has potential utility for guiding evaluations of educational personnel. This is illustrated in the following descriptions of the four types of evaluation.

A context evaluation helps clarify the evaluatee's work environment and assess what improvements are most needed in this environment. It defines pertinent geographical and programmatic boundaries. It helps to identify the needs, opportunities, and problems that merit the staff member's priority attention. It also identifies environmental constraints that should be considered in judging the staff member's level of performance.

The key point underlying context evaluations is that educational institutions and educational roles exist to serve the needs of society and its children and youth. Educators do and should strive to clarify and pursue worthy goals. However, their contributions must be evaluated, not in terms of goal achievement alone, but more fundamentally against their contributions to meeting student needs and institutional needs. An evaluation would be faulty and misleading if it determined that a school, teacher, or superintendent had achieved stated goals, but did not also confirm that the

goals were directly responsive to assessed student and institutional needs and that these needs had been successfully addressed. A context evaluation provides both the basic information for determining priority objectives, when planning an improvement process, and the basic criteria against which to assess the significance of outcomes.

Needs are things necessary or useful for fulfilling some defensible purpose, such as the education of a particular group of children. Opportunities are unused ideas and untapped resources potentially available for use in improving the district's service to students. Problems are the barriers to meeting student needs or using potentially available ideas and resources, e.g., too little money to hire highly qualified teachers, an overtaxed citizenry that cannot or will not pass school finance issues, school buildings that are locked up and not available for educational purposes in the evenings and summers, a drug and/or gang culture surrounding certain schools, children who regularly come to school sick and/or hungry, and uninvolved parents. Such impediments have to be dealt with appropriately to help the district's personnel to meet student needs. Within the mix of underlying problems are the intractable constraints in the context, e.g., poverty in the community, limited school district finances. To be fair, the board should judge the superintendent's performance in light of the constraints in the school district environment.

There are two kinds of needs. Consequential needs are necessary or desired levels of attainment by the children on indicators derived from the fundamental purpose of the enterprise, e.g., functional literacy. Instrumental needs are sufficient resources, content, procedures, and delivery mechanisms to fulfill the consequential needs, e.g., a sound curriculum; adequate finances, materials, and facilities; competent teachers; and a sound management system. The board and superintendent should periodically assess both consequential and instrumental needs to identify

which needs are being met and which are not. For those needs being well met, the district should at least keep doing what it is presently doing and continue monitoring the need variables to help guard against deterioration. When any needs are unmet, the district should consider instituting an improvement process designed to correct the deficiencies.

Input evaluations search out alternative improvement strategies and assess their relative strengths, weaknesses, and costs. The goal is to assure that improvement efforts and regular district activities will be guided by relevant and cost-effective activity and budgetary plans. An input evaluation may follow the conservative course of examining and providing direction for strengthening the current educational plan. Even then, the input evaluation should be keyed to finding better options. The bottom line concerns of input evaluations are to search continuously for better ways of fulfilling district functions and to help ensure that the district's scarce resources will be used to best advantage. Input evaluations are relevant for assessing and strengthening plans at all levels, from the individual superintendent's annual work plan, to the math curriculum, to the district's strategic plan, to the annual budget.

Some of the key criteria employed in input evaluations are listed below:

1. Involvement of an appropriate scope of stakeholders in the planning process
2. Extent to which the search for alternative improvement strategies is keyed to meeting assessed student and district needs
3. Sufficiently broad search for alternative strategies and materials
4. Promise of each alternative to serve a significant number of students
5. Potential of the draft or adopted plan to bring about substantial and lasting improvements

6. Sufficient staff to carry out the work

7. Clarity, completeness, and appropriateness of the work schedule

8. Clarity, completeness, and appropriateness of the budget

9. Inclusion of a sound evaluation plan

10. Cost efficiency of the work plan

11. Potential cost-effectiveness of the implemented plan compared to other available options

12. Fit of the plan to the system where it has to be carried out

13. Provision for a broad base of sound communication to guide the implementation of the plan

14. Plan's freedom from unethical aspects

15. Feasibility of carrying out the plan in the particular setting

Process evaluations monitor, document, and assess the implementation of plans. They are conducted and reported during the implementation phase to help guide and control the quality of the process, to identify needs for strengthening the guiding plan, and to document the actual implementation process. Following the completion of an implementation cycle, the collected process evaluation information is used to sum up and assess the extent to which the plan was appropriately implemented. It is to be expected that process evaluations will sometimes lead to midcourse changes in plans. Such changes should be recorded and considered when judging the completeness and quality of the implementation process.

In its oversight role, the board should obtain periodic reports on the superintendent's implementation of the year's work plan. At the end of the implementation process, the board should review and assess the completeness and quality of the implementation effort.

However, a caveat is in order. It is inappropriate and dysfunctional for any policy board to micro-manage the work of its chief executive officer. If the board of education gets too involved with monitoring and controlling the superintendent's work, it can compromise its role of policy maker and become inappropriately and counterproductively involved in administering the school district. The board should not use process evaluation as a device for controlling and guiding the day-to-day work of the superintendent. It should request and use only that process evaluation information that it needs to carry out its oversight functions.

Clearly, the board does bear responsibility to provide general oversight of the superintendent's leadership activities and the district's ongoing programs, and this requires that it periodically obtain progress reports. The board needs these to keep apprised about the superintendent's performance in fulfilling duties and the district's success in implementing its plans. Such reports should inform the board about such matters as how well policies were carried out, whether district projects are on time and within budget, and if not, what corrective actions are being taken, whether the superintendent did the work necessary to fulfill all the assigned duties, how the superintendent actually approached and executed the duties, what corrective actions were needed and carried out along the way, what was the quality of the superintendent's performance, and what changes in duties and performance plans may be needed for next year's work. Clearly, in issuing improvement directives and even deciding on the superintendent's continued employment, the board must assess how well the superintendent carried out the assigned duties.

In order to fulfill the board's need for process evaluation information, it is recommended that the superintendent maintain a portfolio of pertinent information. The portfolio's contents should be keyed to pertinent defined performance responsibilities, such as those found in the

superintendent's board-assigned duties, the district's strategic and annual operating plans, and the design of a special improvement project. An up-to-date and complete performance portfolio contributes to the superintendent's being well prepared to place her/his up-to-date performance record before the board when it raises questions about the overall process. The board and superintendent can find such a record useful when trying to determine why an improvement project did or did not succeed.

Product evaluation focuses on accomplishments, especially the meeting of student needs. It looks for evidence related to student-related improvements in such areas as achievement, health, racial integration, attendance, graduation, and acceptance into higher education. It also looks for improvements in the district's delivery system in such areas as teaching, curriculum, facilities, racial composition of the staff, school safety, school climate, government and nongovernment grants, district policy, parent involvement, school-university collaboration, and community support.

Product evaluation is even broader in scope. Like good pharmaceutical research, it seeks both unanticipated and anticipated outcomes and both negative and positive effects. In addition, sound product evaluation provides bases for comparison, including data from previous years plus data from pertinent norm groups. In general, product evaluation looks at the effectiveness of the superintendent, district, or other entity in bringing about needed improvements.

Overview of Educational Personnel Evaluation

The preceding presentation of the basic concepts of educational evaluation reveals the complexity of this field. This concluding part of the section is a further examination of that complexity. Particularly, it is important to warn against overly simplistic approaches to evaluation and instead to apprise evaluators, especially board members, of the general factors to be kept in mind as they plan, conduct, and use results from superintendent performance evaluation and as they diagnose flaws in a superintendent performance evaluation system. It is also useful to identify all the important tasks in the evaluation process that have to be incorporated into the improved model for superintendent performance evaluation.

The following analysis is drawn from research conducted by the author and Dr. David Nevo from Tel Aviv University in a related CREATE project focused on developing a theory of teacher evaluation. Using the methodology of grounded theory development (the development of theory based on the systematic study and analysis of the phenomena of interest in a variety of real world settings), a range of different teacher evaluation systems were examined in an attempt to identify, categorize, and interrelate all the important variables that operate in teacher evaluations. At a general level, the variables found in teacher performance evaluation systems should be useful for defining the important variables in superintendent performance evaluation.

We found many variables inherent in the teacher evaluation systems studied. These can be organized quite easily into activities associated with context, input, process, and product. This grouping is consistent with the usual practice in grounded theory development of placing

variables into the familiar systems categories of inputs, processes, and outputs (wherein context and input factors are combined under inputs).

Figure 1 summarizes the variables involved in evaluating superintendent performance, including the broad categories of context, inputs, process, and products, plus the subcategories. Consistent with the preceding discussion in this paper, the core set of concepts in this model contains the main principles of the Joint Committee *Personnel Evaluation Standards*: propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy. In Figure 1, these are in the first subcategory of the **Evaluation Products** denoting "Assessed Evaluation Services." The main point is that evaluators must strive to make their evaluations of high quality. In order to achieve this aim, the evaluator must also consider and address (at least take into account) the variables in the **Context**, **Inputs,** and **Process** segments of the model. If the inputs and processes are sound, then the **Evaluation Services** should prove to be proper, useful, feasible, and accurate, and lead to important **Impacts**, as appropriate, of the evaluation on individual professionals, groups of professionals, the school district as a whole, and the students, parents, and other customers. The **State/Community/District/School/Context** variables remind that there are always constraints and conditions beyond the school district's control that may influence educators' performance and that should be considered in interpreting and acting upon evaluation findings.

It is noteworthy that the "independent variables" in this framework (denoted especially in the subcategories called **Printed Structure for Evaluation, Enabling Evaluation Dynamics**, and **Evaluation Process** contain all of the variables (and more) that appear in the guidelines and common errors sections of *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*. The findings summarized in Figure 1 provide one cross validation of the evaluation theory described in *The Personnel*

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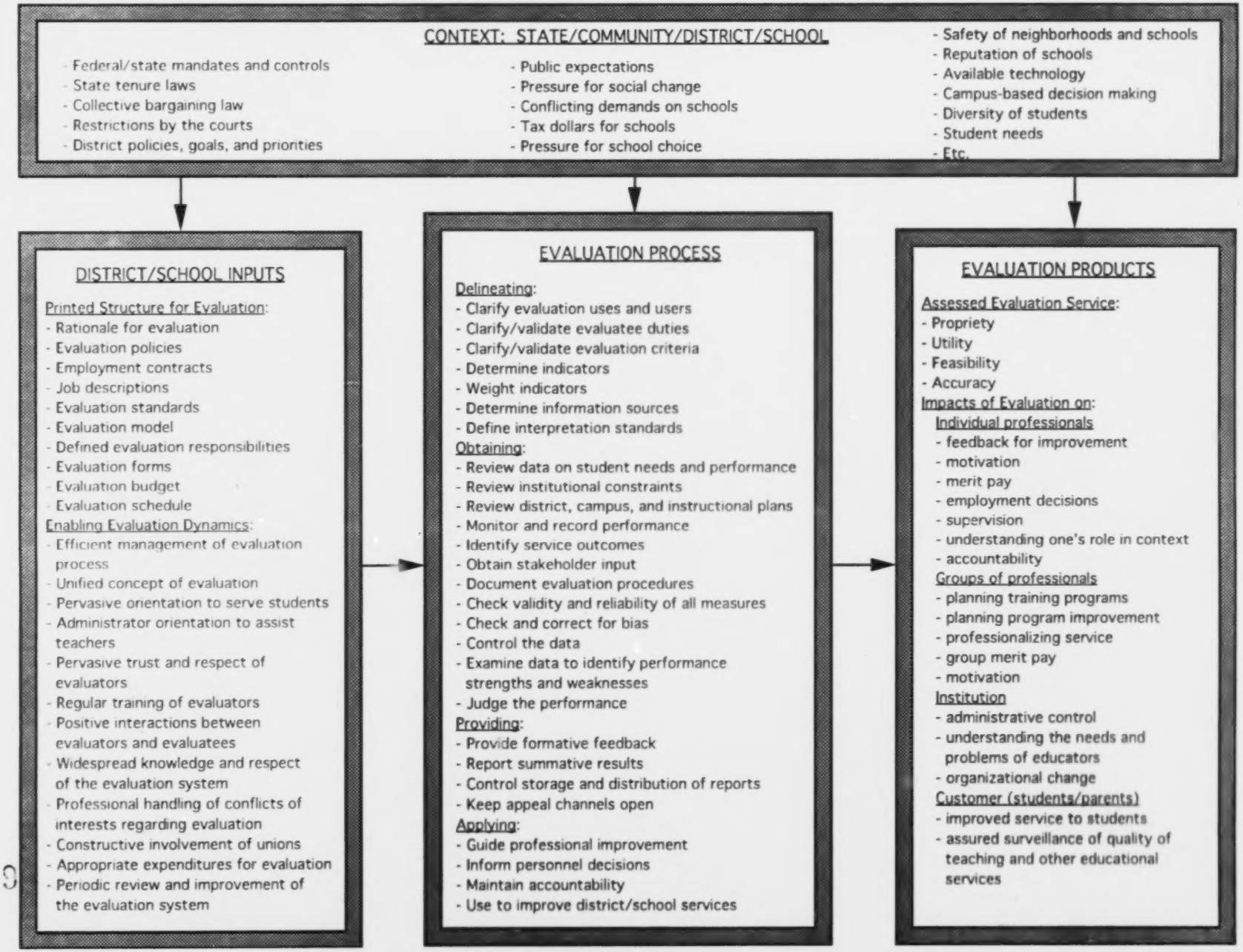
FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: FACTORS THAT DEFINE AND INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEMS


CONTEXT: STATE/COMMUNITY/DISTRICT/SCHOOL
- Federal/state mandates and controls
- State tenure laws
- Collective bargaining law
- Restrictions by the courts
- District policies, goals, and priorities
- Public expectations
- Pressure for social change
- Conflicting demands on schools
- Tax dollars for schools
- Pressure for school choice
- Safety of neighborhoods and schools
- Reputation of schools
- Available technology
- Campus-based decision making
- Diversity of students
- Student needs
- Etc.
DISTRICT/SCHOOL INPUTS
Printed Structure for Evaluation:
- Rationale for evaluation
- Evaluation policies
- Employment contracts
- Job descriptions
- Evaluation standards
- Evaluation model
- Defined evaluation responsibilities
- Evaluation forms
- Evaluation budget
- Evaluation schedule
Enabling Evaluation Dynamics:
- Efficient management of evaluation process
- Unified concept of evaluation
- Pervasive orientation to serve students
- Administrator orientation to assist teachers
- Pervasive trust and respect of evaluators
- Regular training of evaluators
- Positive interactions between evaluators and evaluatees
- Widespread knowledge and respect of the evaluation system
- Professional handling of conflicts of interests regarding evaluation
- Constructive involvement of unions
- Appropriate expenditures for evaluation
- Periodic review and improvement of the evaluation system
EVALUATION PROCESS
Delineating:
- Clarify evaluation uses and users
- Clarify/validate evaluatee duties
- Clarify/validate evaluation criteria
- Determine indicators
- Weight indicators
- Determine information sources
- Define interpretation standards
Obtaining:
- Review data on student needs and performance
- Review institutional constraints
- Review district, campus, and instructional plans
- Monitor and record performance
- Identify service outcomes
- Obtain stakeholder input
- Document evaluation procedures
- Check validity and reliability of all measures
- Check and correct for bias
- Control the data
- Examine data to identify performance strengths and weaknesses
- Judge the performance
Providing:
- Provide formative feedback
- Report summative results
- Control storage and distribution of reports
- Keep appeal channels open
Applying:
- Guide professional improvement
- Inform personnel decisions
- Maintain accountability
- Use to improve district/school services
EVALUATION PRODUCTS
Assessed Evaluation Service:
- Propriety
- Utility
- Feasibility
- Accuracy
Impacts of Evaluation on:
Individual professionals
- feedback for improvement
- motivation
- merit pay
- employment decisions
- supervision
- understanding one's role in context
- accountability
Groups of professionals
- planning training programs
- planning program improvement
- professionalizing service
- group merit pay
- motivation
Institution
- administrative control
- understanding the needs and problems of educators
- organizational change
Customer (students/parents)
- improved service to students
- assured surveillance of quality of teaching and other educational services

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Evaluation Standards. Also, the members of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation might find the results of this teacher evaluation research useful for expanding the guidelines and common errors listed in the next edition of *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*.

Tasks in the Evaluation Process

If the new model to be presented later in this paper is to be useful to boards of education, it must delineate the tasks essential in evaluating the superintendent's performance. This is problematic, however. If there are too many tasks, they will not be understood and remembered and the model will not be much more than theoretical window dressing. On the other hand, if the tasks are too general and too few, they may be grasped and remembered but will not provide the guidance necessary to conduct sound evaluation.

Therefore, the approach in this paper is to provide a general process (delineating, obtaining, providing, and applying), then to unpack each of these major tasks in terms of the more specific tasks to be performed. The function of this approach is to help a school district's educators share a common view of the general evaluation process and to provide them with back-up, detailed information on evaluation tasks for use in delineating and scheduling a year's evaluation work, and providing the materials and training necessary to carry it out. This approach to summarizing and explicating the evaluation process is also intended to provide the structure for preparing functional district evaluation manuals, data collection portfolios, rating forms, stakeholder survey forms, structures for professional development plans, models for reporting evaluation results to the community, etc. The specific tasks listed for the Delineating, Obtaining, Providing, and Applying task areas in the Evaluation Process segment of the framework in Figure 1 are

consistent with the procedural guidelines presented in *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*. Since they were also found to be included in school district teacher evaluation systems, incorporation of these steps into a new model and associated implementation manual for superintendent performance evaluation should contribute to development of a sound unified model for educational personnel evaluation.

3. ASSESSMENT OF THE MAIN MODELS USED TO EVALUATE THE PERFORMANCE OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

The first two sections of this paper on the superintendency and key concepts of educational evaluation theory are steps toward developing a defensible and functional model for evaluating superintendent performance. This section adds a third set of building blocks for the new model. It presents results (from the underlying CREATE project) of a search for and assessment of main models now used to evaluate superintendent performance.

Twelve Models for Evaluating Superintendent Performance

Figure 2 identifies, groups, and characterizes each of 12 identified superintendent evaluation models. The investigators believe that these account for most of the models currently used to evaluate superintendent performance. The models are grouped according to how evaluation judgments are made--namely, whether evaluation conclusions are based mainly on global judgment, judgment driven by specified criteria, or judgment driven by data.[7]

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[7] The input of CREATE National Advisory Panel member Dr. Jason Millman was especially useful in determining these grouping categories. The systematic evaluation of the 12 models was a joint and very time-consuming effort by Carl Candoli, Karen Cullen, Patricia First, Barbara Kreuzer, Jason Millman, and the author of this paper.

Figure 2

SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Summary Descriptions of Alternative Models

ORIENTATION	Global Judgment				Judgment Driven by Specified Criteria					Judgment Driven by Data		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MODEL	Board Judgment	Descriptive Narrative Reports	Formative Exchanges About Performance	Stakeholder Evaluation	Printed Rating Forms	Report Cards	Management by Objectives	Performance Contracting	Duties-Based Evaluation	Superintendent Portfolio	Student Outcome Measures	School and District Accreditation
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Individual and collective board judgment	Board's end-of-year written report	Regular exchanges between board and superintendent	Assessment based on systematic querying of stakeholders	Assessments are gathered with a printed form	Board grades the superintendent's performance	Assessment against prespecified objectives	Contract specifying expected outcomes and consequences of success or failure	Comprehensive assessment against defined duties	Demonstration of performance using accountability records	Judgment of superintendent performance against student achievement	Judgment of superintendent performance based on district accreditation results
VARIATIONS	Verbal or written judgments	Structured or open-ended report; superintendent may also write a report	In scheduling of evaluation exchanges	Criteria may or may not be specified; methods of data collection and sampling may vary	In types of form, e.g., rating scale, checklist, or questionnaire. In groups completing the form.	Other groups, e.g., media, assign grades	Objectives may be specific or broad	Sometimes includes a financial incentive	May use specific administrator duties or broader job responsibilities	Board may collect some of the data; may include aggregation guidelines	Tests vary; they may be state mandated, norm-referenced, or criterion-referenced	In evidence considered and how it is collected; accrediting body may be a regional or state organization
PURPOSES	Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Mainly formative	Mainly summative	Formative and summative	Summative	Formative and summative	Mainly summative	Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Summative	Summative
CUT SCORES/ STANDARDS	Unspecified	Unspecified	Unspecified	May be specified	Descriptive (e.g., "unsatisfactory") or numerical ratings	Unspecified	May be specified	Specified in the contract	May be specified	Usually unspecified	Norms may be used	Externally defined
DATA COLLECTION	Board members as participant observers	Board members as participant observers	Board members as participant observers	Varied, may include letters, questionnaires, rating forms, focus groups	Completion of the form by participant observers	Not always focused Observation/review of records and test scores	Board members as interviewers and observers	Observation/ review of records and test scores	Observation, accountability reports, or data review	Portfolio compiled by superintendent and possibly board	Student tests and other outcome information	Self-study and site visits
REPORTING	Executive session; oral and written	Written report in executive session	Periodic discussions, usually in executive session	Oral or written; first in executive session followed by public report	Written report; public or private	May be in executive session or given to the media	Oral and/or written; usually in executive session	Oral and/or written; usually in executive session	Oral and/or written; often in executive session	Discussion in executive session	Interpretation of test scores; usually in executive session	Executive discussion of a public report
GENERAL TIMETABLE	Usually once a year; may be more often	Usually once a year	Periodic or as needs arise	Not more than once a year	Usually once a year	Usually once a year	Quarterly	Usually once a year	Usually once a year; can be more often	Usually midyear and end of year	Usually once a year	Whenever accreditation report is due, e.g., every 5 years
EVALUATOR/ PARTICIPANTS	Board members	Board members and sometimes the superintendent	Board members and superintendent	Board members and stakeholders, sometimes external evaluators	Board members and possibly other stakeholders	Board members; sometimes media or others	Board members and sometimes an outside evaluator	Board members and possibly other stakeholders	Board members and sometimes outside evaluators	Board members and superintendent with input from other stakeholders	Board members	District and accrediting personnel

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Figure 3

SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Main Strengths and Weaknesses of Alternative Models

ORIENTATION	Global Judgment				Judgment Driven by Specified Criteria					Judgment Driven by Data		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MODEL	Board Judgment	Descriptive Narrative Reports	Formative Exchanges About Performance	Stakeholder Evaluation	Printed Rating Forms	Report Cards	Management by Objectives	Performance Contracting	Duties-Based Evaluation	Superintendent Portfolio	Student Outcome Measures	School and District Accreditation
MAIN STRENGTHS	Easy and inexpensive to use Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Grounded in direct board/superintendent exchange Provides scope to consider a wide range of criteria tied to district priorities Involves multiple judgments as a basis for making the summative evaluation	Inexpensive and easy to implement Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Encourages board reflection and a carefully considered evaluation Provides scope to consider wide-ranging criteria tied to district priorities Board and superintendent interact formally at least annually and directly Evaluation is flexible and responsive to district priorities and needs	Easy and inexpensive to implement Ensures frequent evaluation using board-approved procedures Much scope to consider a range of locally relevant criteria and to respond to changing district circumstances Provides continuous, formative feedback Board and superintendent interact formally, frequently, and directly about adequacy of the superintendent's performance	Regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process Provisions for collecting data from a variety of sources Encourages participation of the broader community in evaluation of the superintendent	Ensures regular evaluation by the district's top policy body Easy and inexpensive to implement Criteria are specified and applied consistently by all evaluators Provides for cross-checks of ratings and addressing conflicts of interest Well-developed forms ensure a comprehensive evaluation	Permits great flexibility in determining the criteria to be used Provides a familiar format for communicating evaluation results to the community Easy and inexpensive to implement Involvement of others may ensure fair treatment of the superintendent Provision for the superintendent and board to agree on criteria before the evaluation	Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Performance criteria/objectives are specified and periodically reviewed Recognition of and planning for current district priorities A more objective approach Easy to implement	Ensures regular evaluation using board- and superintendent-approved procedures Criteria are specified, and there is scope to incorporate district priorities There is a legal avenue for appeal Is cost-efficient and flexible enough to meet local conditions	Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Easy and not too costly to implement Includes ethical considerations A well-defined duties list will ensure a comprehensive evaluation Criteria for the evaluation are specified based on agreed-upon duties Facilitates clarification of superintendent and board roles Provision for collecting data from a variety of sources	Assures regular evaluation using board- and superintendent-approved procedures Helps delineate board/superintendent roles Data sources are clear, multiple, and auditable Use of data reduces bias and conflicts of interest Flexibility to include (and review regularly) wide-ranging criteria tied to district needs Includes provision for stakeholder input	Assures regular evaluation using board-approved methods Use of learning measures reduces risk of bias and conflict of interest Reasonably inexpensive to implement Focuses the work of the superintendent on student achievement	Regular evaluation by an external organization, which may lend credibility Ensures that students receive a minimally acceptable level of education Requires minimal staff, superintendent, and board time May yield other information that is important to the district Data sources are clear May help district to set goals and priorities
MAIN WEAKNESSES	Lack of prespecified evaluation criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No procedures for resolving disputes among board members No provision for appeals or review and improvement of evaluation procedures Lack of involvement of other stakeholders	Lack of prespecified criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures No explicit involvement of stakeholders	Lack of specified criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No mechanisms for appeals and review of evaluation procedures No explicit involvement of stakeholders	Time consuming and difficult to implement No procedures for appeals and for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the evaluation Criteria may be unclear and inconsistently applied May not be confined to agreed-upon performance criteria No explicit procedure for including student learning as a basis for evaluating the superintendent	Little involvement of stakeholders Criteria may be out-of-date, superficial, or inadequately keyed to job requirements Lack of auditable data No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures and forms Unlikely to provide continuous feedback for improving superintendent performance Printed form may emphasize general responsibilities to the exclusion of specific responsibilities (or vice versa)	Criteria may be inadequately linked to job requirements No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures Lack of auditable data No systematic involvement of stakeholders Prone to bias and conflict of interest No provision for multiple sources of information	Performance objectives may be poorly defined or neglect important issues or duties No involvement of stakeholders No procedures for appeals or data audits The model may or may not consider work environment	Performance objectives may neglect important job responsibilities Unintended outcomes, e.g., unethical behavior, and a narrowing of the curriculum Unresponsive to changing district circumstances and unexpected situations No involvement of stakeholders No provision for review of evaluation procedures May not consider the work environment	No provision for appeals and review of evaluation procedures Duties may be superficial and not keyed to district needs May or may not consider the work environment Inadequate guidelines for involving stakeholders and collecting auditable data	Can be time-consuming and administratively difficult to implement Lacks provision for appeals and periodic review of evaluation procedures May not be confined to identified and agreed-upon professional responsibilities	No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures and achievement tests No involvement of stakeholders Student outcomes are but one aspect of job responsibilities Student data may not provide a full range of performance duties Controlling for student background factors is difficult to achieve Unfair to judge the superintendent on factors not directly under her/his control	Superintendent evaluation may not be a major part of the accreditation Lack of local control may lead to subordination of district priorities Accreditation criteria may be inadequately linked to job requirements No provision for appeals and data audit Little involvement of stakeholders Minimal involvement of board and superintendent May not be cost-effective

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Elements of an Evaluation Model

Each model is characterized under a series of headings, defined as follows:

Distinctive Features: the various aspects of the model that best describe and distinguish it as it is currently used in U.S. school districts

Common Variations: aspects of the model that often vary from one district to another

Purposes/Uses: the main ways in which the model is typically used--formative, summative, or both

Cut Scores/Standards: the formally specified level of expected achievement for performance of the job function

General Timetable: how often the evaluation is conducted

Evaluator/Participants: the individuals and stakeholders who have input to the evaluation process

The flip side of Figure 2 is Figure 3, which lists the main strengths and weaknesses of each model. These were determined by comparing each model to the requirements of all 21 standards in *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* (Joint Committee, 1988). Both figures (2 and 3) draw on an exhaustive in-depth analysis presented in a separate technical supplement, entitled

TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT TO SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: THE STATE OF THE ART.

The general message communicated in Figures 2 and 3 is that each of the 12 evaluation models has strengths as well as weaknesses. But none is sufficiently strong (in light of the Joint Committee standards) to warrant recommending its continued use, at least without substantial revision. Another message is that the analysis of the 12 models provides useful points for consideration in the development and assessment of the new model. Particularly, it will be useful to keep in mind the strong and weak features of extant evaluation models in the course of designing the new model.

Strengths of Superintendent Performance Evaluation Models

The identified strengths of superintendent performance evaluation models are listed below followed by the names of the models exhibiting each strength:

1. **Ease of use**: seen in the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Printed Ratings Form Model, Management by Objectives Model, Report Cards Model, Duties/-Responsibilities-Based Evaluation Model, School and District Accreditation Model

2. **Low cost** to implement: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Printed Ratings

Form Model, Report Cards Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/-Responsibilities-Based Evaluation Model, Student Outcome Measures Model

3. **Acceptability to school board members**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Management by Objectives Model

4. **Grounding in direct exchange between board and superintendent**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Report Card Model

5. **Scope to consider a wide range of questions**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

6. **Encouragement of Board to provide a thoughtful and considered written evaluation to the superintendent**: the Descriptive Narrative Model

7. **Scope to consider wide-ranging criteria** tied to district priorities: the Descriptive Narrative Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

8. Useful means of **continuous formative evaluation**: Formative Exchanges About Performance Model

9. **Flexibility** to respond to changing district needs and circumstances: the Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Descriptive Narrative Reports Model, Report Cards Model, Performance Contracting Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model

10. Provision for **involving stakeholders**: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Report Card Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model

11. Strong provisions for **political viability**: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model

12. Assurance of **regular evaluation by the Board**: the Printed Rating Forms Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model, Student Outcome Measures Model

13. **Criteria are specified and may be tied to district priorities**: the Printed Rating Forms Model, Management by Objectives Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

14. Provision for **cross-check of ratings**: the Printed Rating Forms Model

15. Provisions for **addressing conflicts of interest**: the Printed Rating Forms Model

16. **Well-developed forms** to help ensure a comprehensive evaluation: the Printed Rating Forms Model

17. Evaluation **results are in a familiar form**: the Report Cards Model

18. May foster **high community involvement**: the Report Cards Model

19. Assures **recognition of and planning for district priorities**: the Management by Objectives Model

20. Emphasis on **objectivity**: the Management by Objectives Model

21. Clear **legal avenue for appeal**: the Performance Contracting Model

22. **Grounding in ethical considerations**: the Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

23. **Data sources are clear, multiple, and auditable**: the Superintendent Portfolio Model, School and District Accreditation Model

24. Use of data **reduces bias and conflicts of interest**: the Superintendent Portfolio Model, Student Outcome Measures Model

25. **Enhanced evaluator credibility through regular evaluation by an external organization**: the School and District Accreditation Model

26. **Fosters at least a minimally acceptable level of education for students**: the School and District Accreditation Model

27. **Yields data that have a wide range of uses**: the School and District Accreditation Model

28. **Employs multiple judgments** as a basis for making a summative evaluation: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model

29. **Board and superintendent interact formally at least annually**: the Descriptive Narrative Reports Model, Formative Exchanges about Performance Model

30. Obtains **data from a variety of sources**: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

31. Encourages **participation of the broader community** in the evaluation of the superintendent: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model

32. Facilitates **clarification of superintendent and board roles**: the Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model

33. **Focuses attention on student achievement**: the Student Outcome Measures Model

34. **May help district to set goals and priorities**: the School and District Accreditation Model

Weaknesses of Superintendent Performance Evaluation Models

The identified weaknesses of the 12 models are listed below followed by the names of models exhibiting each strength:

1. **Unclear and/or inconsistent application of criteria**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Stakeholder Evaluation Model

2. **Unclear and/or not auditable data**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Printed Rating Forms Model, Report Card Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

3. **Vulnerability to bias**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Report Card Model

4. **Vulnerability to conflict of interest**: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Report Card Model, School and District Accreditation Model

5. **Lack of regular monitoring** of the evaluation system, **lack of independent review**, and/or **lack of provision for appeal**: the Board Judgment/Traditional

Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Report Card Model, Management by Objectives Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model, the Superintendent Portfolio Model, Student Outcome Measures Model, School and District Accreditation Model

6. Little or **inadequate provision for involving stakeholders** in the evaluation process: the Board Judgment/Traditional Model, Descriptive Narrative Model, Formative Exchanges About Performance Model, Report Card Model, Management by Objectives Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model, Student Outcomes Measures Model, School and Accreditation Model

7. Can be inordinately **time consuming**: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model

8. **Difficult to implement**: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model

9. **Criteria, duties, and/or performance objectives used are out-of-date, superficial, and/or not keyed sufficiently to job requirements**: the Printed Rating Forms Model, Report Card Model, Management by Objectives Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model, Superintendent Portfolio Model, School and District Accreditation Model

10. Engender **undesirable unintended outcomes**: the Performance Contracting Model

11. **Unresponsiveness to changing district circumstances**: the Performance Contracting Model

12. **Narrowly focused on student outcome data**: the Student Outcome Measures Model

13. **Superintendent evaluation not well addressed by accreditation data**: the School and District Accreditation Model

14. **Not cost effective**: the School and District Accreditation Model

15. **No explicit procedure for including student learning** as a basis for evaluating the superintendent: the Stakeholder Evaluation Model

16. **Unlikely to provide continuous feedback** for improving the superintendent's performance: the Printed Rating Forms Model

17. **Emphasizes general responsibilities to the exclusion of specific responsibilities**: the Printed Rating Forms Model

18. **No provision for multiple sources of information**: the Report Cards Model

19. **Neglects consideration of the work environment**: the Management by Objectives Model, Performance Contracting Model, Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model

20. **Difficult to separate student background factors from school district effects on student achievement**: the Student Outcome Measures Model

21. **Unfairly holds superintendent accountable for factors not under her/his control**: the Student Outcome Measures Model

The data reflected in the above lists are interesting. The comparison of the 12 models to *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* revealed, across the models, a total of 34 relatively distinct strengths and 21 relatively distinct weaknesses. This suggests that strengths tend to be more model specific, while weaknesses are somewhat more pervasive.

The number of strengths seen in individual models ranged from 4 for the Student Outcome Measures Model to 9 for the Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model. The Descriptive Narrative Reports Model, the Printed Rating Forms Model, and the Report Cards Model all were identified with 7 strengths. All the other models were identified with 5 or 6 strengths. The numbers of weaknesses ranged from 3 for the Superintendent Portfolio Model to 7 weaknesses for the Report Cards Model. Five of the models showed 6 weaknesses. The other 6 models had 4 or 5 weaknesses.

Overall, the models averaged 6.2 strengths and 5.2 weaknesses. By category, the Global Judgment models averaged 6 strengths and 5.5 weaknesses; the models that emphasize Judgment Driven by Stated Criteria averaged 6.8 strengths and 5.2 weaknesses; and the models that emphasize Judgment Driven by Data averaged 5.3 strengths and 4.7 weaknesses.

From these data it appears that the models Driven by Criteria may have a slight advantage for further development. The Duties/Responsibilities-Based Model (with 9 strengths and 5 weaknesses) and the Printed Rating Forms Model (with 7 strengths and 4 weaknesses) may have the most to offer. Overall, however, none of the models was impressive when examined against the 21 standards. In *Consumer Report* terms, none of the models was found to be a "BEST BUY."

Perhaps the main value of the preceding analysis is in the lists of strengths and weaknesses of extant evaluation models. They should prove useful as checklists in the course of developing and validating the new superintendent performance evaluation model.

4. DRAFT OF AN IMPROVED MODEL FOR SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

The preceding sections were designed to provide a firm foundation for this section. The purpose of this section is to provide a sound new model for superintendent performance evaluation.

The writing of the first three sections was a humbling experience. They provide a glimpse of the extreme complexity of the superintendent's job and the difficulties of evaluating superintendent performance in an accurate, fair, useful, and feasible manner. While the Overview

and Sections 1-3 confirm the need for better superintendent performance evaluation models and provide useful leads for model development, especially criteria for others to use in judging new models including the contents of this section, they provide inadequate direction for integrating the concepts, standards, procedures, and constraints into a defensible model.

The goal of this section is necessarily modest: to outline the rudiments of the new model being sought. Full development of the desired new and validated model for superintendent performance evaluation must await substantive reactions to this section and subsequent reworking, review, field testing, and revision of the subject model. Reactions to this draft of the new model are invited, and the needed follow-up work is scheduled as part of CREATE's 1994-95 work.

The model outlined in this section is designed to

a. meet the requirements of *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* (Joint Committee, 1988)

b. build on the strengths of extant superintendent performance evaluation models and avoid their weaknesses

c. embody and focus on the generic duties of the school district superintendent

d. integrate established concepts of educational evaluation theory, including the basic purpose of evaluations (to assess merit and/or worth), the generic process of evaluation (delineating, obtaining, providing, and applying information), the main

classes of information to be collected (context, inputs, processes, and products), and the main roles of evaluation (formative input for improvement and summative assessment for accountability)

Throughout the section, an attempt is made to work from the general to the complex. The intent is to provide the reader with a gestalt, then little by little to build in the details. Also, a number of charts are used (both in this section and the subsequent one on implementation of the model) to help the reader view the proposed model and underlying theory from a number of different perspectives, while sustaining the main message.

The contents of the remainder of the section are organized as follows:

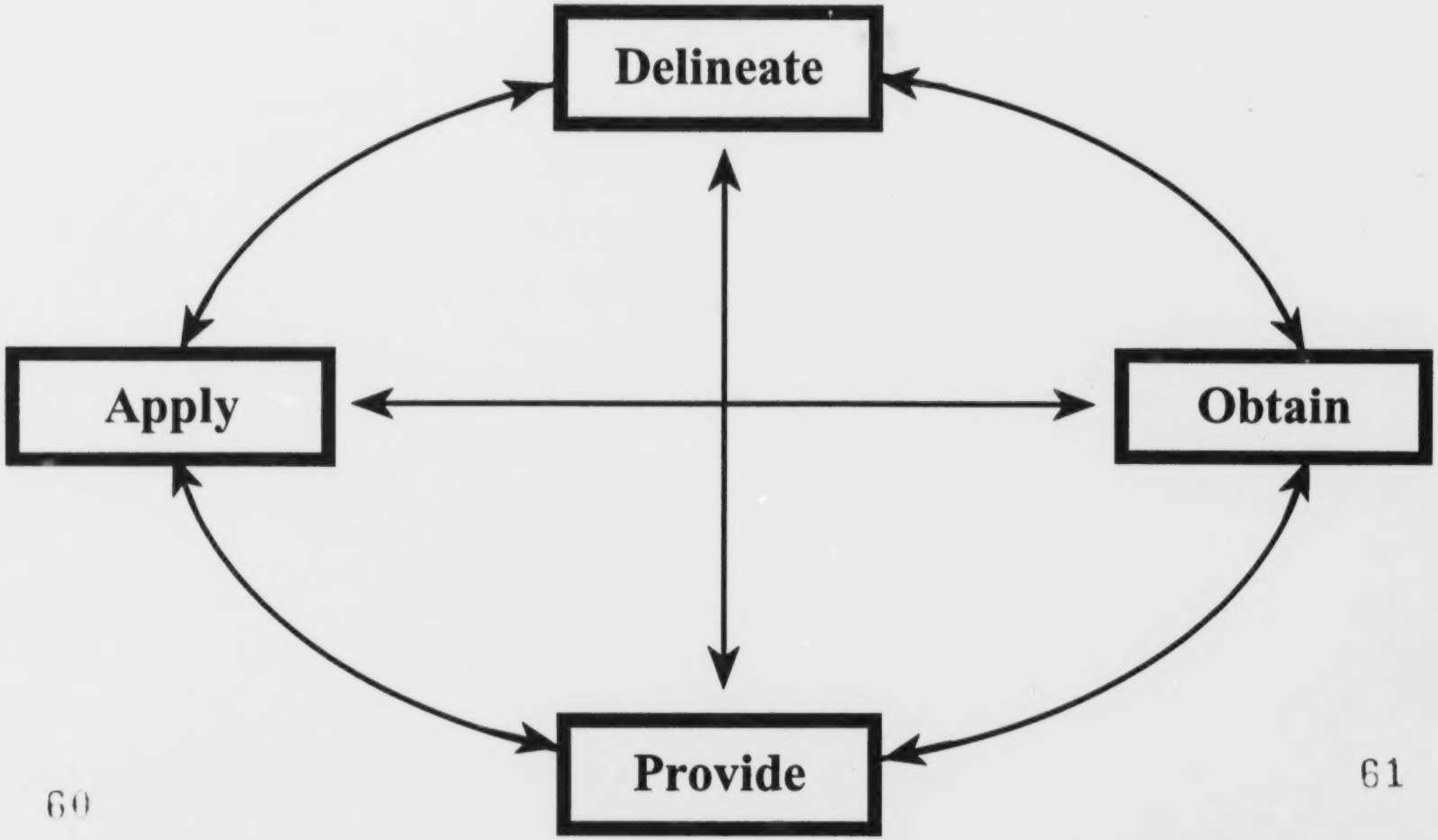
- General Framework of Evaluation Tasks
- Grounding Evaluation in Communication
- Keying Evaluation to the Duties of the Superintendency
- Proposed General and Illustrative Specific Duties of Superintendents
- General Framework to Guide Collection and Use of Information
- Putting the Pieces Together

General Framework of Evaluation Tasks

In this paper, the bottom line concern is assessment of the merit and worth of superintendent performance. Figure 4 presents a general framework of the evaluation tasks required to accomplish such assessments. The framework denotes that evaluations are generally cyclical and include four main task areas: **delineating**, **obtaining**, **providing**, and **applying** pertinent information. The two-way arrows connecting all the tasks with each other remind that, beyond

Figure 4

Main Tasks
in Evaluating Performance



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being psychologically cyclical, the evaluation tasks are in actuality interactive and may influence each other. The school board that masters these tasks can be confident that it is doing a thorough and systematic job of superintendent performance evaluation, in a manner that should be valuable to the district, the board, the superintendent, and other-right-to-know parties. At this point in the presentation, an overview of the task areas is provided. Later in the section the more detailed tasks involved in carrying out each stage are described.

The **delineating** task area provides the crucial foundation for the evaluation cycle. In this stage the board, in communication with the superintendent, clarifies the superintendent's duties and the basic ground rules for the evaluation. Decisions are made and recorded concerning such matters as whether the evaluation will deal with only merit or also with worth, what audiences will have access to what parts of the evaluation results for what purposes, what superintendent accountabilities will undergird the collection of assessment information, how the different accountabilities will be weighted for importance, and what standards will be used to reach conclusions about merit and/or worth of the superintendent's performance.

In making these decisions, the board and superintendent will pay particular heed to the superintendent's contract and job description, the results of previous evaluations of the superintendent, current assignments given to the superintendent by the board, and pertinent data on school system performance and needs, among other sources. The board and superintendent need to engage in productive communication and make a written record of their agreements, in order to prepare for the ensuing stages of the evaluation process.

The **obtaining** task area includes the tasks involved with collecting, organizing, validating, and analyzing the needed information. In general, information is gathered about the district context (e.g., needs assessment data, including last year's student achievement, attendance, and graduation data), district and superintendent inputs (e.g., campus plans, the district's strategic plan and budget, and the superintendent's work plan), district and superintendent process (e.g., activity reports, financial data, and stakeholder judgments), and district and superintendent products (e.g., this year's student achievement and related data, special project outcomes, the superintendent's evaluations of district staff, and unexpected outcomes of superintendent activities).

Beyond these general classes of information, data should be collected in response to the specific information requirements determined in the delineating task area. Both the general and specific information should be organized to respond to the key evaluation questions determined in the delineating task area, then analyzed in accordance with the given weights for different parts of the information and the rules for reaching judgments about merit and/or worth.

The **providing** task area involves reporting the information obtained to the intended users in ways to best serve the intended uses. This task area may include a modicum of formative feedback from the board to the superintendent to provide guidance during the school year. However, the board should keep this type of feedback to a minimum to help assure that the board will not infringe on the superintendent's day-to-day administrative authority. The providing activities also include the compilation of one or more summative evaluation reports to serve accountability and decision-making purposes, and possibly to provide direction for the superintendent's professional development.

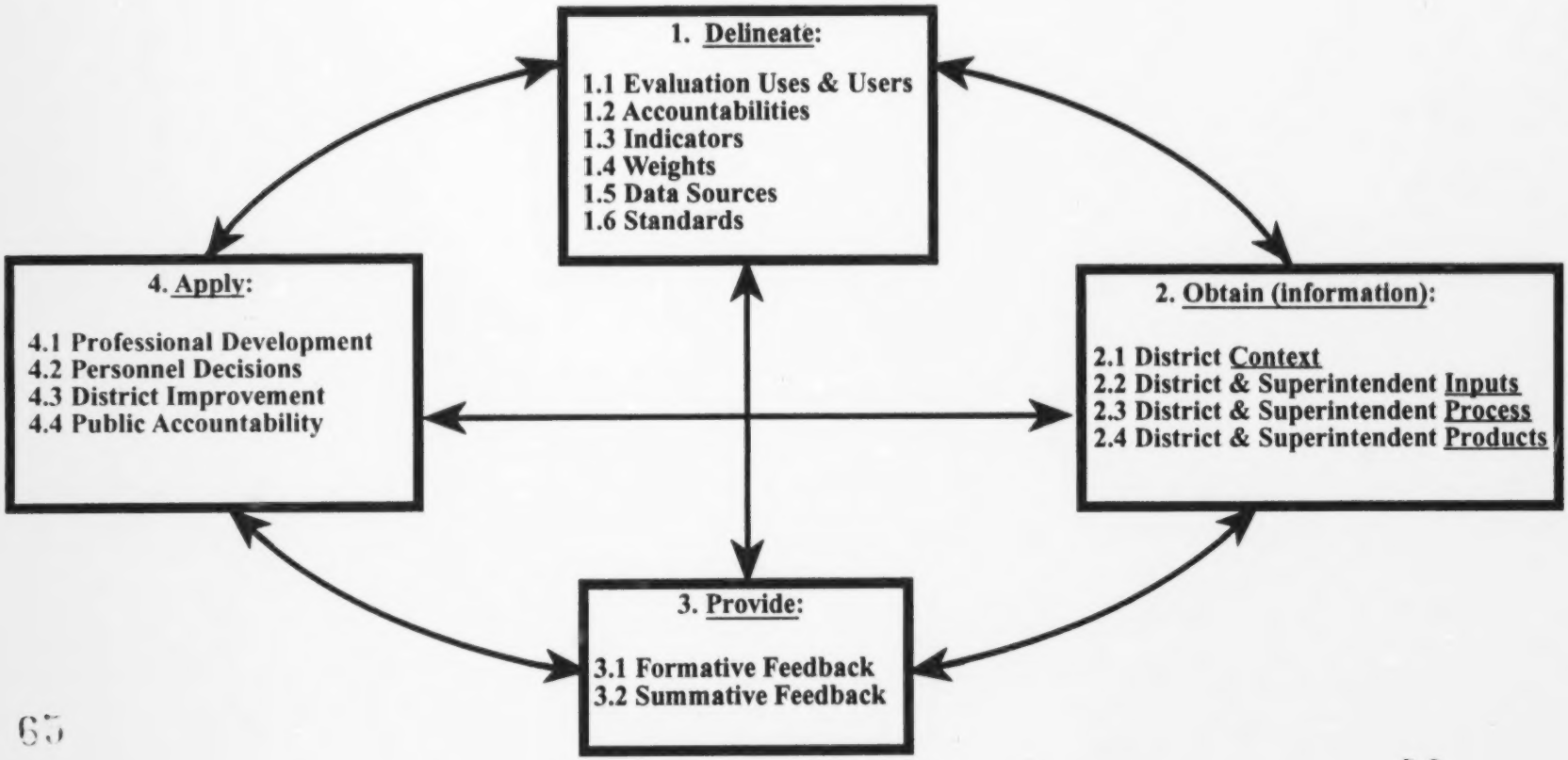
Basically, the providing agent in the evaluation of superintendent performance is the board. The board delivers information to the superintendent and, in accordance with prior decisions reached in the delineating task area, may also deliver a report to the press and community. Formative evaluation reports are often oral, while summative evaluation reports must be in writing and must address issues of merit and/or worth. Depending on prior decisions about intended uses and users, some reports will be confidential and discussed in executive session, while others will be public. These are decisions to be made in advance and communicated, so that when the reporting is done there will be no basis for dispute as to which audience should receive which report.

The **applying** task area concerns the use of evaluation reports. This task area is differentiated from the providing task area in order to underscore the importance of assuring that evaluation findings are used in meaningful ways and not just collected and reported. Particular intended uses and users will have been determined in the delineating activities. In general, boards and superintendents should plan to use reports to guide the superintendent's professional development, reach employment decisions (e.g., on salary, modification of assigned duties, continuation/termination), and as input for planning district improvement efforts (e.g., reorganization of the central office, employment of specialized personnel, and curriculum revision). The board should also consider how it should help other users to understand and apply reports (e.g., the press and community as they attempt to gain a better understanding of the superintendent's past performance and vision for improving the district).

Figure 5 is provided as a somewhat more detailed version of the scheme of four basic tasks. It summarizes the preceding description of the four tasks, with particular reference to evaluation of the performance of the superintendent. The parts listed for each task area denote the specific

Figure 5

Tasks and Subtasks in Evaluating Superintendent Performance



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tasks. The discussion turns next to basic foundations for implementing the four task areas and subtasks.

Grounding Evaluation in Communication

The general evaluation work described above relies heavily on sound communication. It is in the best interests of the board, superintendent, and members of the school community to develop an evaluation system in consideration of input from stakeholders, to maintain common understanding of the superintendent evaluation system among the stakeholders, and to earn widespread respect for the evaluation system's integrity and value to the district. In order to make the evaluation system function effectively, it is also important to ground its process in effective ongoing communication between the board and the superintendent.

Communication to Help Develop or Improve the Evaluation System. The topic of evaluation makes many people nervous. Often they don't understand what is involved; view the process as highly subjective, secretive, and potentially corrupt; and/or see it as only a ritual with little or no value. Even the most rigorously designed and carefully executed evaluation system can engender such concerns if the stakeholders are not involved in setting up and periodically improving the evaluation system and if they are not kept informed about its purpose, structure, operations, findings, impacts, and quality.

In organizing and operating a superintendent performance evaluation system, the board and superintendent should strive to make evaluation a legitimate and important service concern of school district stakeholders. When the board and superintendent decide either to develop a new

superintendent evaluation system or to review and revise the present system, they should provide concrete opportunities for stakeholders to keep informed about the work and to provide input. For example, they might conduct announced meetings to hear and discuss input from interested parties.

As another example, the district might engage a standing representative accountability commission, as recently seen in Dallas, Texas, and Lincoln, Nebraska, to provide systematic review and advisory assistance to the evaluation effort. Membership on the accountability commission might include parents, teachers, students, administrators, board members, and community representatives. Such a group can help insure that views from a representative group of stakeholders are considered in designing and/or improving the evaluation system. The members of the accountability commission can also be asked to help explain the evaluation system to other stakeholders. This recommendation may have value beyond superintendent performance evaluation. An effective accountability commission might also be asked to provide advisory and liaison services related to the district's other systems that evaluate student performance, programs, and teaching performance.

After the evaluation system is developed or refined, the board needs to achieve widespread understanding and respect for the system, even beyond those who were involved in its development. Thereafter, the board must communicate clearly and regularly its aims for the evaluations and the essential elements of the system.

In a printed description of the system, the board should periodically inform school district staff and the community about the criteria and procedures used to evaluate superintendent

performance. In these releases the board should encourage, provide opportunities for, and give assurance that it will use input from stakeholders. The board should maintain clear and accessible regular channels for receiving input from stakeholders on how to improve the evaluation system. It is also in the best interests of all involved parties that the board keep the local press correctly informed about the nature of the superintendent performance evaluation system.

The value of the preceding general advice is not just to earn political support for the superintendent evaluation system, but also to gain input on how to make the system better. In addition, an honest attempt to inform and involve stakeholders in making superintendent evaluation work well will undoubtedly enhance the public credibility of the school district and its evaluation processes. Finally, it is best not to keep the press guessing about the nature of the criteria, procedures, and information used to evaluate superintendent performance, but to do everything possible to assure that media accounts of superintendent evaluation are based on accurate information.

The board should define, with the superintendent's participation, what information from the evaluation is appropriate for public release and what information should be kept confidential. Then the board should make sure that the appropriate information is obtained, verified for accuracy, and released only as prescribed by policy and formal agreements.

Communication Required to Implement the Evaluation System. In addition to the communication needed to set up, periodically improve, and explain the superintendent evaluation system, there is also a need for healthy communication within each evaluation cycle.

Communication between superintendent and board is the very essence of the delineating activity in which they determine the evaluation questions, criteria, weights, variables, etc. that will guide the collection, reporting, and use of information. Communication is also part and parcel of the providing activity in which the board presents both formative and summative feedback to the superintendent and sometimes provides summative reports to the diverse group of school district staff and constituents. Communication is involved in the applying work, especially when the board works out a relevant professional development plan for the superintendent and/or works with her/him to use the evaluation results to modify school district plans for the coming year.

Clearly, the board and superintendent must engage in an ongoing process of effective communication if evaluations are to be keyed to important questions, help the board and superintendent to work well together, and be effective in bringing about improvements in performance of the superintendent and district. As much as possible the model recommended in this section is designed to integrate the performance evaluation process into the regular schedule of meetings between the board and superintendent.

Keying Evaluation to the Duties of the Superintendency

Just as superintendent performance evaluations should be grounded in effective communication, they should also be grounded in sound conceptualizations of superintendent duties. These are the responsibilities, recognized in the U.S. society, in the local community, by the state education department, and by the pertinent educational professions, that superintendents have to fulfill in serving their communities and school districts. In the duties-based approach to evaluation, the

board should assess the superintendent's fulfillment of the generic professional duties of all superintendents and the more specific duties in the particular superintendency.

In order to make the proposed model as useful as possible, this section proposes that boards adopt a particular set of general superintendent duties to undergird their evaluations of superintendent performance. The duties presented in this section were determined through a careful integration of the duties identified by the author based on study of administrator responsibilities in Texas school districts and the recently released AASA standards for superintendent competencies. (See Section 1.) Figure 6 provides a matrix combining these two lists. The broad duties of the superintendent are listed on the vertical dimension and the general AASA superintendent competencies are listed across the top of the matrix. The intersecting cells show the many areas where particular superintendent competencies are needed in the fulfillment of particular duties. The recommended set of superintendent duties is presented below in two levels. The first level includes duties recommended for adoption by boards as the general responsibilities of the superintendent. The second level is presented as an illustrative list of additional specific duties from which the board might choose and adapt the specific duties to be considered in a particular year's evaluation.

Proposed General and Illustrative Specific Duties of Superintendents

1. Promote and support **student growth and development**.

   1.1 Assess and report on student achievement, attendance, and graduation rate.

   1.2 Provide leadership for annually assessing and setting priorities on student and district needs.

Figure 6

MATRIX OF SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

SUPERINTENDENT DUTIES (Texas)	1. Leadership and District Culture	2. Policy and Governance	3. Communications and Community Relations	4. Organizational Management	5. Curriculum Planning and Development	6. Instructional Management	7. Human Resource Management	8. Values and Ethics of Leadership
	SUPERINTENDENT COMPETENCIES (AASA)							
1. Foster Student Growth and Development	X	X	X	X			X	
2. Foster Equality of Opportunity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Foster a Positive School Climate	X		X	X			X	X
4. Lead School Improvement	X	X	X	X	X			
5. Foster Improvement of Classroom Instruction	X					X	X	
6. Lead and Manage Personnel		X		X			X	
7. Manage District Resources		X		X			X	X
8. Foster Positive Student Conduct	X	X	X	X				X
9. Foster Effective School-Community Relations	X	X	X					X
10. Engage in Professional Development	X	X	X	X	X			X
11. Relate Effectively to the Board	X	X	X	X				X

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1.3 Evaluate and provide direction for improving school/district offerings.

1.4 Motivate and assist students to develop a sense of self-worth.

1.5 Provide leadership for improving parent involvement in the schools.

1.6 Set priorities in the context of student needs.

2. Honor diversity and promote **equality of opportunity**.

2.1 Recruit qualified minority and majority staff.

2.2 Examine, communicate, and address gaps in achievement of different groups of students.

2.3 Provide leadership necessary to fully integrate schools and programs.

2.4 Serve as an articulate spokesperson for the welfare of all students in a multicultural context.

2.5 Respect and encourage diversity in students, staff, and programs.

2.6 Insure equitable distribution of district resources.

3. Foster a positive **school climate.**

3.1 Assess and provide leadership for improving environments in and around each district school.

3.2 Conduct school climate assessments.

3.3 Articulate and disseminate high expectations for student learning and teaching quality.

3.4 Promote an atmosphere of acceptance of all students and a caring climate for learning.

3.5 Promote, demonstrate, and support clear two-way communication at all levels of the district.

3.6 Promote academic rigor and excellence for staff and students.

3.7 Encourage and foster self-esteem in staff and students.

3.8 Manifest multicultural and ethnic understanding.

3.9 Assess individual and institutional sources of stress and apply methods for reducing stress.

4. Provide leadership in **school improvement** efforts.

4.1 Develop, communicate, and implement a collective vision of school improvement.

4.2 Encourage, model, and support creativity and appropriate risk taking.

4.3 Provide direction and support for periodic review of curriculum and school policies and procedures.

4.4 Formulate strategic plans, goals, and change efforts with staff and community.

4.5 Formulate procedures for gathering, analyzing, and using district data for decision making.

5. Stimulate, focus, and support **improvement of classroom instruction**.

5.1 Provide encouragement, opportunities, and structure for teachers to design better learning experiences for students.

5.2 Evaluate and provide direction for improving classroom instruction.

5.3 Develop and offer opportunities that respond to teachers' needs for professional development.

5.4 Encourage and facilitate the use of new technology to improve teaching and learning.

6. Effectively lead and manage **personnel**.

6.1 Define and delegate administrative authority and responsibility effectively.

6.2 Evaluate performance of subordinates and take appropriate follow-up actions.

6.3 Recognize and reward exemplary performance of subordinates.

6.4 Encourage and support personal and professional growth among the staff.

6.5 Comply with applicable personnel policies and rules.

6.6 Recruit and select competent district personnel.

7. Manage **administrative, fiscal, and facilities functions** effectively.

7.1 Obtain competent fiscal/financial analysis.

7.2 Prepare appropriate budgets and cost estimates.

7.3 Manage the district budget.

7.4 Create and implement an internal/external audit system.

7.5 Maintain accurate fiscal records.

7.6 Ensure that facilities are maintained and upgraded as necessary.

7.7 Manage attendance, accounting, payroll, transportation.

7.8 Manage personal and district time effectively.

7.9 Conduct and use sound evaluation to guide decisions.

7.10 Identify and evaluate alternative employee benefits packages.

7.11 Effectively apply the legal requirements for personnel selection, development, retention, and dismissal.

8. Assure/provide a **safe, orderly environment**.

8.1 Develop and communicate guidelines for student conduct.

8.2 Ensure that rules are uniformly observed and enforced.

8.3 Discipline students for misconduct in an effective and fair manner.

8.4 Promote a collaborative approach to discipline, involving staff, students, and parents.

9. Foster effective **school-community relations**.

9.1 Communicate the school district mission, student and district needs, and district priorities to the community and mass media.

9.2 Apply communication skills in order to recruit community support for school programs.

9.3 Involve parents and other community members in serving school programs.

9.4 Provide service to the community.

9.5 Provide leadership for developing rapport between the schools and the community.

9.6 Obtain and respond to community feedback.

9.7 Implement consensus building and conflict mediation.

9.8 Formulate and implement plans for internal and external communication.

9.9 Align constituencies to support district needs and priorities.

9.10 Build coalitions to gain financial and programmatic support.

9.11 Understand and be able to communicate with all cultural groups in the community.

9.12 Apply formal and informal techniques to gain external perceptions of the district by means of surveys, advisory groups, and personal contact.

9.13 Write and speak clearly and forcefully.

9.14 Identify and analyze the political forces in the community.

9.15 Design effective strategies for passing referenda.

9.16 Successfully mediate conflicts related to the district.

9.17 Respond in an ethical and skillful way to the electronic and printed news media.

9.18 Involve stakeholders in educational decisions affecting them.

10. Embody and promote **professionalism**.

10.1 Participate in professional education organizations.

10.2 Conduct oneself in an ethical and professional manner.

10.3 Stay abreast of professional issues and developments in education.

10.4 Disseminate professional ideas and new developments to other professionals.

10.5 Obtain and use evaluation as a basis for improving performance.

10.6 Maintain an understanding of international issues affecting education.

10.7 Maintain personal, physical, and emotional wellness.

11. Relate effectively to the **school board**.

11.1 Meet the board's needs for information about district performance.

11.2 Interact with the board in an ethical, sensitive, and professional manner.

11.3 Communicate clearly and substantively to the board.

11.4 Educate the board about professional education issues and approaches.

11.5 Recommend policies to improve student learning and district performance.

11.6 Provide leadership to the board for defining superintendent and board roles, mutual expectations, procedures for working together, and strategies for formulating district policies.

11.7 Recognize and apply standards involving civil and criminal liabilities.

11.8 Recommend district policy in consideration of state and federal requirements.

11.9 Draft a district policy for external and internal programs.

11.10 Provide a checklist of procedures to avoid civil and criminal liabilities.

The next section moves from consideration of what duties should be assessed when examining superintendent performance to consideration of what information will be required to make the assessment.

General Framework to Guide Collection and Use of Information for Evaluating Superintendent Performance

The general categories of context, input, process, and product evaluation can assist the board to obtain both the general, year-to-year comparison information and the specific information needed in given years to assess fulfillment of duties. These concepts were introduced and defined in Section 2 and are further discussed here in terms of pertinent questions about superintendent performance and information needed to answer the questions.

Context evaluation provides information on system and student needs, system problems, opportunities that the district might use to improve programs and other aspects of the district, and

assessments of school district goals and objectives. This information is useful for determining job and school district targets early in the school year, for examining the significance of accomplishments near the end of the school year, and for placing the year-end assessment of effectiveness within the proper context of constraints that may have impeded achievement and opportunities that did or could have enhanced accomplishments.

In the beginning of the evaluation year, the board and superintendent need to examine whether or not the superintendent's assigned responsibilities and job targets from the previous year are focused sufficiently on addressing the school district's main leadership needs and problems for the coming year. Data on needs, opportunities, and problems in the district should be employed early in the year to help the superintendent appropriately update duties and job targets. These same data will be useful later in the year for contrasting data on accomplishments (product evaluation) with the needs identified early in the year.

For both early target setting and later examination of significance of accomplishments, the board and superintendent should review available standard district data that might include any or all of the following:

- Student achievement data disaggregated by grade, content area, and race, and contrasted to previous years and to results from similar school districts
- Student attendance
- Student graduation rate
- Incidents of crime in the schools
- Records of student immunization
- Up-to-date data on diversity and extent of integration of the student body and school district staff

- Survey results on school climate from each school
- Report on the dispersion of ratings of effectiveness of teachers and other categories of school staff
- Records of complaints about the district received in previous years
- Most recent school principal reports

Near the end of the school year the board and superintendent should review these same context evaluation data plus information on environmental constraints on what the district and superintendent could accomplish. This helps them to see the superintendent's accomplishments (product evaluation) in the appropriate context: e.g., were the accomplishments significant in comparison to previously identified district needs and priorities and were they basically what could be expected in light of budgetary and other constraints?

Among the context data on constraints and opportunities to be reviewed late in the school year for use in interpreting product evaluation results are the following examples:

- Student mobility rate in each school for each of the past three years
- Percent of school district families below the poverty line
- Percent of free and reduced lunches, disaggregated by school
- The district's per pupil expenditure compared to that of similar districts in the region
- Crime rate statistics, disaggregated by school attendance area
- Data/editorials on school attitudes toward the district
- Community's record in passing school funding issues over the past five years
- Data on teen pregnancies for each of the past three years
- Data on low birth weight babies disaggregated for each of the last ten years
- Percentage of single parent families, by school

Quite obviously, school districts vary widely on the environmental factors listed above. Depending on their status on these and related factors, some districts have a much easier time than others in raising achievement levels. It is reasonable and fair for districts to at least consider the environmental conditions that affected the performance of the superintendent and district. Ideally, districts could do this systematically by statistically removing the influence of background variables from the year-to-year gains in student achievement data, as is being done on a statewide basis in Tennessee (Sanders & Horn, 1993; 1994). However, until the involved state reaches this level of sophistication in collecting and analyzing school district data, it is appropriate that school boards at least do a "clinical" analysis of background environmental information in order to reach reasoned judgments of the accomplishments of the superintendent and school district.

Input evaluations provide information and judgments concerning district budgets, strategic plans, personnel assignments, calendars of events, and superintendent work plans; also information on potentially relevant educational and administrative strategies used elsewhere or recommended in the literature. Early in the fiscal year this information is instrumental for developing a clear understanding between the board and superintendent of the plans for the coming year. The information is also useful for clarifying and otherwise improving the district's strategic plan and the superintendent's work plan. Input evaluations can also be useful late in the year when the board may need to decide whether shortfalls in district and/or superintendent performance are due to inadequate planning.

The main information involved in input evaluations that is designed to guide planning activities includes the following:

1. Plans from previous years

   1.1 District strategic plans

   1.2 Superintendent work plans

   1.3 Board and superintendent assessments of implementation and results of plans from previous years

2. Financial information from previous years

   2.1 District budgets

   2.2 Audited financial reports

   2.3 Board and superintendent assessments of the adequacy of budgets in previous years

3. Plans for the present year

   3.1 Overall district plan

   3.2 Specific plans keyed to priority needs and problems

   3.3 Campus plans

   3.4 School district calendar for the year

   3.5 Superintendent work plan and schedule of main events

   3.6 Board agenda for the year

   3.7 Independent evaluations of the planning documents

4. Reports on effective practices in other districts

   4.1 Example strategic plans, budgets, and year-long calendars from similar districts with reputations for excellence

   4.2 Evaluation reports from projects that addressed problems being faced in the present district

   4.3 Reviews of literature on educational and administrative strategies that might be adopted by the district

5. Approach to planning in the district

5.1 Description of the district's approach to strategic planning

5.2 Records of the involvement of stakeholders in the planning process

5.3 Evaluation reports on the district's planning process

As a part of their regular communication, the board and superintendent need to review plans, budgets, accounting reports from previous years, work plans, and calendars. They should do so in the interest of assuring that plans appropriately address unmet student needs. In addition to reviewing and judging district plans, the board can be assisted by learning what plans, planning processes, and particular improvement strategies are working well in other districts. Consistent with the need to ground planning as well as evaluation in sound communication, the board should also assure that the district's planning process includes appropriate involvement of stakeholders.

The superintendent has a major and ongoing responsibility to provide the board with process evaluation information. Essentially, this includes documentation and progress reports on the implementation of district and superintendent work plans and use of district funds and other resources. The information should also include any noteworthy modification in plans, schedules, assignments, and budgets. Much of the needed process information will be given at board meetings in the form of written and oral progress reports by both the superintendent and other school district staff. These reports will cover progress in carrying out special projects; updates on the development of curriculum materials, development of funding proposals, recruitment of staff, training of staff, meetings with stakeholders groups, etc.; delivery of instruction and other district services; and expenditures in comparison to the budget. The superintendent can and should expect to receive the board's evaluations of the adequacy of the reported progress during

these meetings. Such process evaluations by the board can provide direction and stimulation for appropriate problem-solving activities by the superintendent and staff.

In addition to this regular exchange, superintendents are advised to maintain portfolios of up-to-date information on the implementation of plans. Such an up-to-date information source can assist the superintendent to address unexpected questions from the board. The information will be invaluable to the board when it conducts its summative evaluation of the superintendent's performance. If the superintendent defines a clear structure for the portfolio, staff can be engaged to regularly supply the needed documentation as it becomes available. Part of next year's work of the CREATE project being discussed in this paper involves development of a model superintendent portfolio.

Product evaluation will be a primary concern of the board when it develops its summative evaluation report on the superintendent's performance. In addition to the record on the extent to which targeted needs were addressed (process information), the board will need evidence on the extent of improvements and shortfalls (product information). The product evaluation indicators will primarily be a function of the priority needs identified earlier in the year; for example, the board will look for improvements in such targeted need areas as those listed below:

1. Teacher attendance
2. Involvement of stakeholders in the district's planning process
3. Racial balance of staff across the schools
4. Maintenance of school buildings
5. Constructive coverage by the press of the district's programs

6. Measures of school climate across the district

7. Dropout rate

8. Percentage of students having needed immunizations

9. Achievement test scores of minority students

10. Student attendance

11. Physical fitness of students

12. Foundation and government grants and contracts

13. Replacement of science text materials

The preceding list is provided for illustrative purposes only. It suggests that in any given year, the outcomes expected of a superintendent are likely to be keyed to clear directives from the board or to past disappointments, limited in number, and heavily dependent for interpretation on past measurements in both the present district and similar districts. It is likely that the board will be more interested in the direction of outcomes (improvement versus deterioration or maintenance of the status quo), than in whether or not some targeted values are met or exceeded.

Certainly, the board and superintendent may previously have set clear standards for the expected level of improvement, but such determinations at the precise cut-score level are invariably arbitrary. On the other hand, agreements between the board and superintendent that performance must improve are not arbitrary. The emphasis on reaching the summative judgment must be on whether the unmet needs were professionally and substantially addressed and whether the current year's measure was decidedly in the direction of improvement. Also, the board will be interested in learning whether the level of performance in its district is comparable to that in similar districts known for excellent programs and achievements. Of somewhat less pertinence but

nevertheless high interest to the community is how the district compares to state and national norms.

Product evaluations must also look for positive and negative side effects or unexpected outcomes. The superintendent can determine some of this by maintaining a section on unexpected accomplishments, as well as the one on expected accomplishments in the superintendent performance portfolio. In addition, the board might conduct a hearing in which stakeholders are invited to submit evidence and judgments about the accomplishments of the school district. Such a hearing is likely to reveal both positive and negative side effects.

To supplement or as an alternative to the hearing, the board might survey different stakeholder groups, asking them to identify and assess the significance of the superintendent's accomplishments. In a discussion of a prior draft of this paper, Michael Scriven suggested that each member of a select stakeholder panel might be asked to identify the superintendent's most noteworthy accomplishment and most negative influence, then to assign an overall grade on the superintendent's performance.

When feasible, the board and superintendent should obtain and analyze the full range of information pertinent to assessment of the year's outcomes (current outcome levels, past records on the outcome measures, pertinent comparison and norm data, previously set standards, data on unexpected outcomes, student body characteristics, district constraints, and the board's summative process evaluation) and reach reasoned judgments of the significance of the identified improvements. They may find it useful to engage a stakeholder panel to review the information

and present their judgments of what the data mean in terms of quality of the district's outcomes and district leadership.

The foregoing discussion of context, input, process, and product evaluation is summarized in Figure 7. For each type of evaluation, the chart identifies pertinent information to be obtained, methods to use to obtain the information, and uses of the information obtained. Board presidents and superintendents may find this chart useful for informing new board members about the kind of information they should be seeking and using to evaluate superintendent performance, as well as the performance of the overall district.

Putting the Pieces Together

Figure 8 provides an overview of the evaluation model outlined in this chapter, in the form of three concentric circles.

The outer circle denotes that the evaluation must be designed, conducted, used, and assessed in compliance with the principles of sound personnel evaluation: propriety, utility, feasibility, and accuracy. Thus, the Joint Committee *Personnel Evaluation Standards* are integral to this evaluation model. Operationally, the model requires that the district adopt *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* as district policy and periodically obtain external evaluations of the superintendent evaluation system against the requirements of the standards.

The intermediate circle summarizes the main tasks in conducting a personnel evaluation. These are delineating the superintendent's duties and ground rules for the evaluation; obtaining context,

Figure 7. Four Types of Evaluation

	CONTEXT EVALUATION	INPUT EVALUATION	PROCESS EVALUATION	PRODUCT EVALUATION
INFORMATION	1. Multiyear district data: • test results • student attendance • graduation • dropouts • student characteristics • staff characteristics • staff evaluations • school environment • school programs • student services • district finances • district facilities • complaints 2. Data from comparable districts 3. Pertinent national & state norms 4. Conclusions re needs, problems, opportunities	1. District strategic plan 2. Staff assignments 3. District calendar 4. Budget 5. Accounting reports from prior plans 6. Superintendent duties 7. Superintendent salary 8. Superintendent work plan 9. Parent & community involvment 10. Promising new strategies & associated evaluations 11. Independent assessment of the district's plans, strategies, assignments, & budgets	1. Progress reports on: • special projects • staffing • product development • delivery of instruction • delivery of student services • stakeholder involvement 2. Accounting reports 3. Exception reports, e.g., modifications in • plans • assignments • schedules • budgets 4. Independent assessment of operations	1. Comprehensive identification of outcomes 2. Comparison of outcomes to • assessed needs • assigned duties • previous trends • achievements in similar districts • pertinent norms 3. Judgments of outcomes in consideration of • needs • opportunities • problems • constraints • costs
METHOD	1. District data banks 2. Stakeholder panel 3. School climate surveys 4. Annual principal reports 5. Clippings file 6. Hearings 7. Quantitative & qualitative analysis	1. Strategic planning process 2. Budget planning process 3. Records of stakeholder involvement in planning 4. Site visits to other districts 5. External evaluators	1. Staff/superintendent progress reports 2. Accounting reports 3. Superintendent portfolio of activities 4. Records of stakeholder involvement in programs	1. District data bank 2. School climate surveys 3. Superintendent portfolio of accomplishments 4. Survey of stakeholders 5. Independent ratings by board members 6. Synthesis report by board president/committee
USE	1. Set district priorities 2. Set superintendent job targets 3. Provide basis for judging significance of accomplishments 4. Consider district constraints in judging superintendent performance 5. Target pertinent opportunities for use in school improvement	1. Clarify board /superintendent understanding of plans, assignments, budgets 2. Improve plans, assignments, budgets 3. Involve stakeholders in planning 4. Provide clear guidance for superintendent performance	1. Keep board & community informed about implementation of plans 2. Maintain fiscal accountability 3. Provide early warning system for identifying & addressing implementation problems 4. Maintain record of implementation for use in interpreting outcomes	1. Help board assess merit and/or worth of superintendent's accomplishments 2. Help board develop outcome-based decisions on superintendent's • salary • continuation • professional development plan 3. Help board be accountable to community for oversight of superintendent's accomplishments

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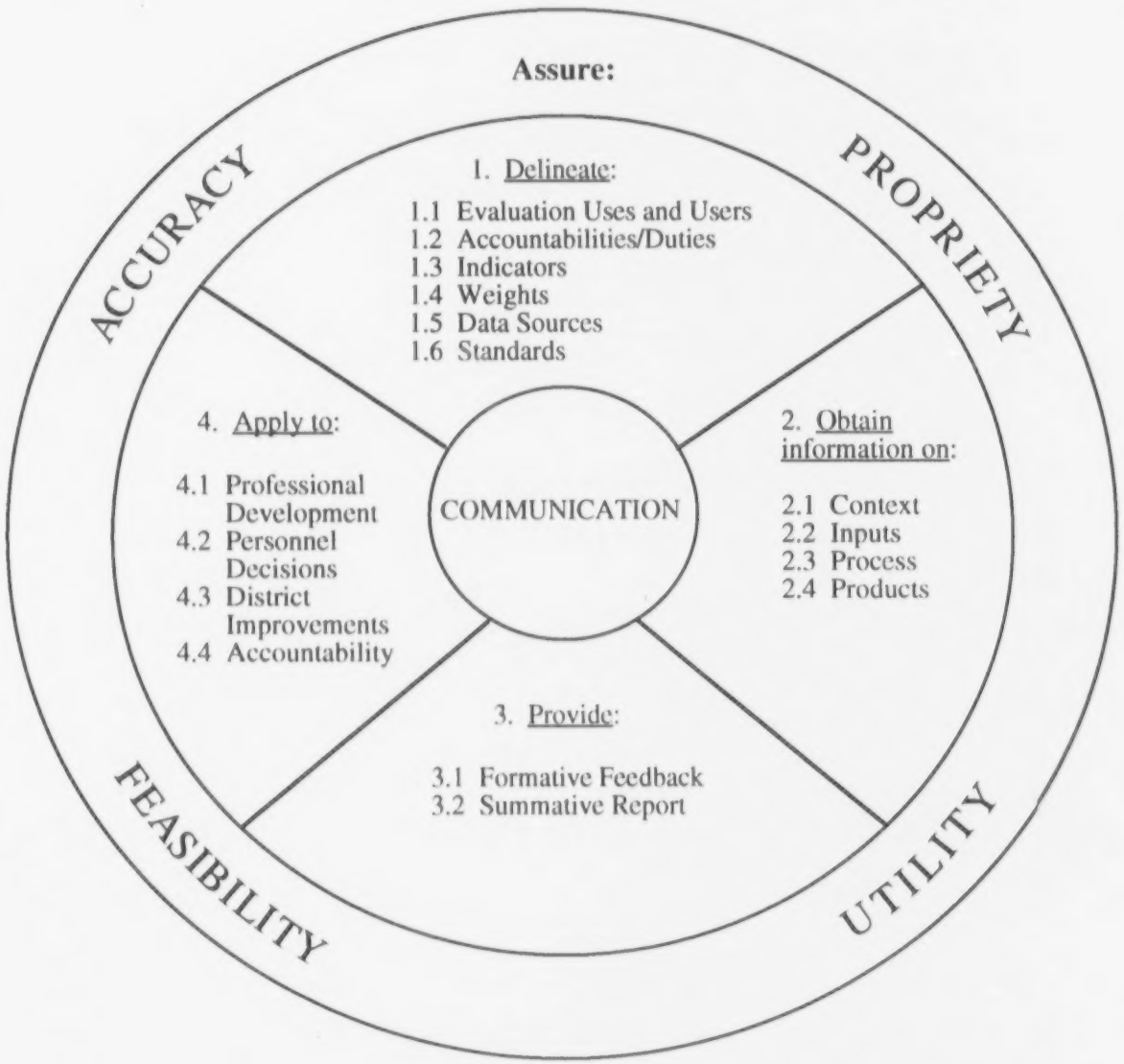
Figure 8

A MODEL FOR EVALUATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND OTHER EDUCATORS



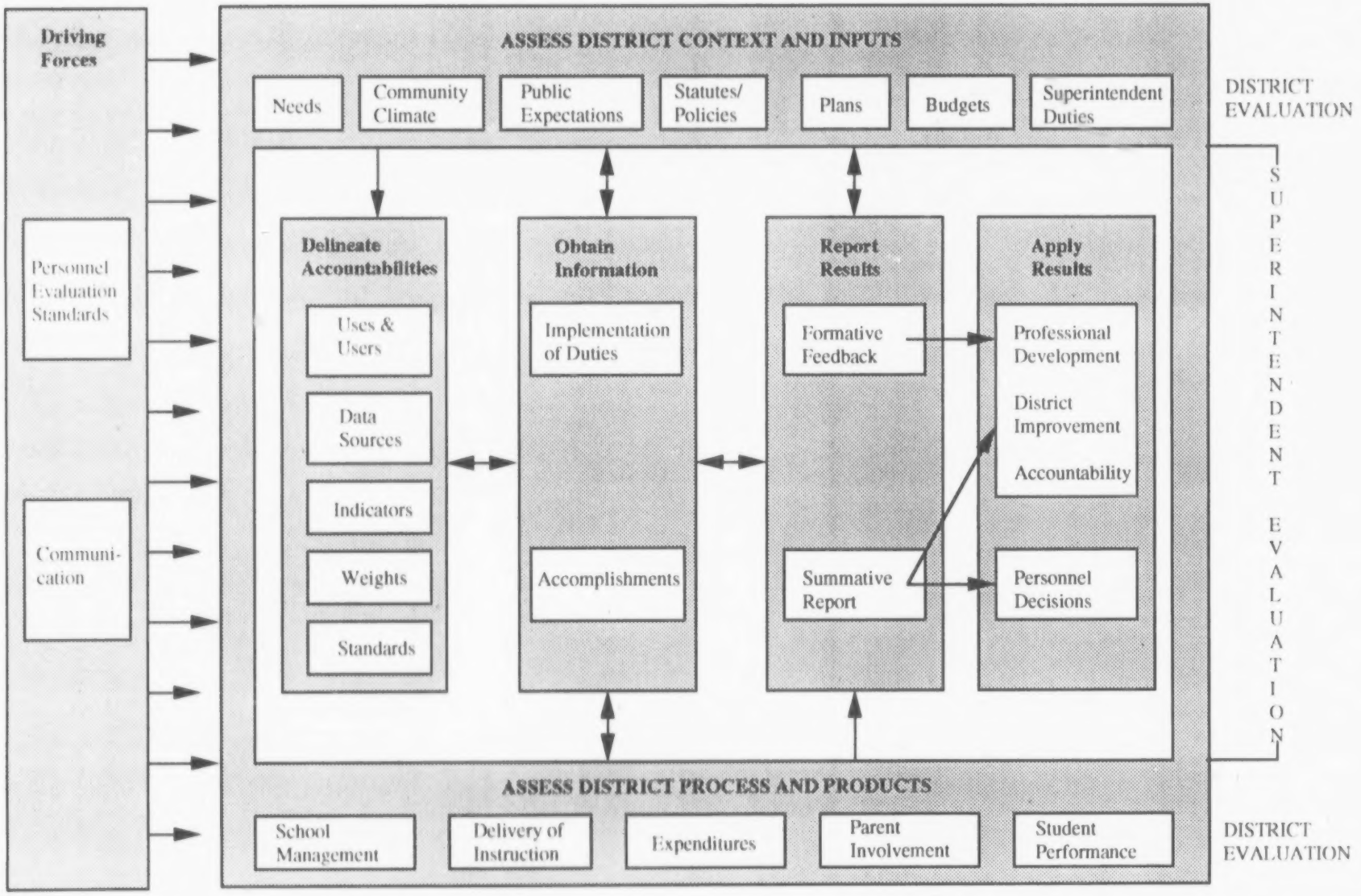
input, process, and product information; providing formative and summative reports; and applying the reports to guide professional development, personnel decisions, improvement projects, and to assure accountability.

The innermost circle emphasizes that the evaluation system and its implementation must be grounded in sound communication. A district accountability commission may be appointed to oversee the development and periodic review and improvement of the evaluation system. Also, the district must provide school personnel and the public with clear and up-to-date information on the structure, implementation, and results of the superintendent evaluation system. Channels should be defined and kept open so that stakeholders can have input into the improvement of the evaluation system. Finally, board/superintendent evaluative exchanges must be ongoing and integrated functionally into their regular flow of work together, especially in their regularly scheduled meetings.

Figure 9 reconfigures the basic model in the form of a general flow of superintendent evaluation activities within the broader context of overall district evaluation. It is a revised version of an earlier draft developed through collaboration with Jason Millman. I am indebted to him for his keen insights in showing the general flow of the superintendent evaluation tasks and their interworkings with district-level evaluation. This flow model uses shaded rectangles to denote the main task areas and unshaded boxes to denote the more specific tasks in the evaluation process. The arrows indicate influential relationships and their direction(s). Some are one-way, as in the influence of district-level context and inputs information on determining the superintendent's accountabilities; others are reciprocal, as in the contribution from district-level evaluations to the information required for superintendent evaluation and vice versa.

Figure 9

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION MODEL



The rectangle to the left includes the driving forces required in any evaluation. These are communication between evaluator and evaluatee and, as appropriate, with district personnel and constituents, plus adherence to the professional standards of sound evaluation. These forces are intended to drive all aspects of the evaluation process.

The large rectangle encompassing the superintendent evaluation activities denotes the larger system of school district evaluation. The top part of this rectangle includes district-level context and input evaluation. The context evaluation variables, as seen in individual unshaded boxes, include needs, community climate, public expectations, and statutes and policies from which are developed the inputs seen in the remainder of the unshaded boxes. These inputs include plans, budgets, and specified superintendent duties. This district-level information, denoted in the Context and Inputs part of the large shaded rectangle, provides an assessment of the district's needs, opportunities, plans, problems, and constraints and is the basis for developing superintendent accountabilities.

The bottom part of this large rectangle denotes that district-level process and product evaluation are potential sources of information for superintendent evaluation. Those charged with carrying out the superintendent evaluation process should keep in mind that district-level evaluations are sources of information for superintendent evaluation both for addressing main questions about superintendent performance and for interpreting performance data in light of dynamics and constraints in the larger district.

We turn now to the four rectangles in the center of the chart. These denote the four main task areas in superintendent evaluation: delineating, obtaining, reporting, and applying evaluation results.

In delineating the superintendent's accountabilities the following decisions are required and made, as noted in the boxes: uses and users of the evaluation, data sources, indicators, weights, and standards. These matters are decided in accordance with district policies and in light of district needs, plans, and budgets plus other context and input evaluation information. The generic duties common to all superintendents and the more specific superintendent duties previously defined by the school board provide the initial baseline for review and updating of superintendent duties.

The next shaded rectangle shows that two basic types of information are obtained to assess superintendent performance. These concern implementation of duties and accomplishments. This Obtaining Information step can be aided by information from the district-level evaluation system. In addition, information obtained uniquely for assessing the performance of the superintendent might contribute to broader evaluations of district performance.

The obtained information feeds into both formative feedback to the superintendent during the year and to a summative report at the end of the year. Arrows from the district-level evaluation rectangle indicate that both formative and summative findings should be interpreted in light of the broader district context.

Four areas of application of evaluation findings are denoted in the Apply Results rectangles. Personnel decisions require summative evaluation. The other three uses--professional

development, district improvement, and accountability--are serviced by both formative feedback and summative reports.

5. IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL WITHIN NORMAL SCHOOL YEAR CALENDARS[8]

In order to schedule and assign responsibilities for implementing the proposed evaluation model, they must be configured in a work schedule that corresponds to the board's annual agenda. No one sequence and set of assignments will fit all situations. Some districts will need to start the evaluation cycle at the beginning of the fiscal year, while others will need to start it in April, at the beginning of the school year, or some other starting point. Therefore, scheduling the superintendent performance evaluation work is something that each school board must do to fit its district's particular situation.

For the proposed evaluation model to work in school districts, its tasks must be integrated into the regular flow of superintendent-board interactions. Typically, the school board and superintendent are involved in formal, planned communications at least once a month at the regularly scheduled board of education meetings. Many school districts schedule two or more meetings a month, so the opportunity for superintendent-board dialogue is ample.

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[8] The contents of this section are based heavily on input from former school district superintendent, Dr. Carl Candoli. I am indebted to him for the valuable realistic perspective and practical content he provided, but need to absolve him of responsibility for any distortions or ambiguities that I may have introduced into the section.

The following suggestions are provided as alternative frameworks around which an adequate superintendent performance evaluation can be conducted. There is no intention in these suggestions that the board should micromanage the work of the superintendent. In suggesting an annual calendar of evaluation tasks, the intent is to suggest a mechanism that boards can use to conduct a complete and fair performance evaluation as a part of the district's normal governance/administrative process.

Superintendent/Board Interactions in the Context of a Fiscal Year

In terms of a time sequence for carrying out these tasks, based on a fiscal year of July 1 through June, the following guidelines are suggested.

	TASKS
QUARTER #1 July, August, September	- Review prior year's activities and results (especially student performance data, performance evaluations of school staff, and system needs) - Set preliminary strategic plan - Set general priorities - Set preliminary superintendent objectives and work plan
QUARTER #2 October, November, December	- Accept campus improvement plans - Set priorities for the year - Adjust strategic plan - Adjust superintendent objectives and work plan as needed - Establish superintendent evaluation design (including intended uses and users, performance indicators and weights, performance standards, data sources and procedures, and reporting schedule)

QUARTER #3

January, February, March - Progress report on implementation of strategic plan and assigned superintendent duties
  - Formative evaluation exchanges between board and superintendent
  - Adjust superintendent priorities and tasks
  - Set improvement targets

QUARTER #4

April, May, June - Accountability report from the superintendent
  - Gather data from community, students, schools
  - Summative evaluation of superintendent
  - Development of professional improvement plan if needed
  - Pertinent personnel decisions
  - Summary report to community
  - Recycle strategic plan

Superintendent/Board Interactions in the Context of an April Through March Calendar

In the event that state law and/or contractual arrangements require the summative performance evaluation of the superintendent to be completed by the end of February, the cycle would be adjusted to conform to legal or contractual requirements. In that case the cycle might be from April 1 through March as follows:

TASKS

QUARTER #1

April, May, June - Recycle strategic plan for the coming year
  - Review prior year's activities and results (especially student performance data, performance evaluations of school staff, and system needs)
  - Set general priorities for the coming year
  - Set preliminary superintendent objectives and work plan

QUARTER #2

July, August, September - Accept campus improvement plans
- Set priorities for year
- Adjust strategic plan
- Adjust superintendent objectives and work plan as needed
- Establish superintendent evaluation design (including intended uses and users, performance indicators and weights, performance standards, data sources and procedures, and reporting schedule)

QUARTER #3

October, November, December - Superintendent's progress report on implementation of strategic plan and assigned superintendent duties
- Formative evaluation exchanges between superintendent and board
- Adjust superintendent priorities and tasks
- Set improvement targets for system and superintendent

QUARTER #4

January, February, March - Accountability report from the superintendent
- Gather data from community, students, schools
- Summative evaluation of superintendent
- Development of professional improvement plan if needed
- Pertinent personnel decisions
- Summary report to community
- Begin recycling of strategic plan

The time lines given above were summarized graphically by Dr. Carl Candoli, as seen in Figures 10 and 11. He recommends that dialogue about the listed tasks should occur sometime during the quarter under which they are listed. Based on his extensive experience in two superintendencies, he recommends that the district's strategic plan be adopted as early in the first quarter as possible. This provides the structure needed to develop a comprehensive and pertinent list of superintendent priorities and tasks. Also, he advises that the summative evaluation be completed as late as is feasible in the fourth quarter, so that it can reflect a comprehensive set

Figure 10

ANNUAL CALENDAR FOR SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD INTERCHANGE

Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30

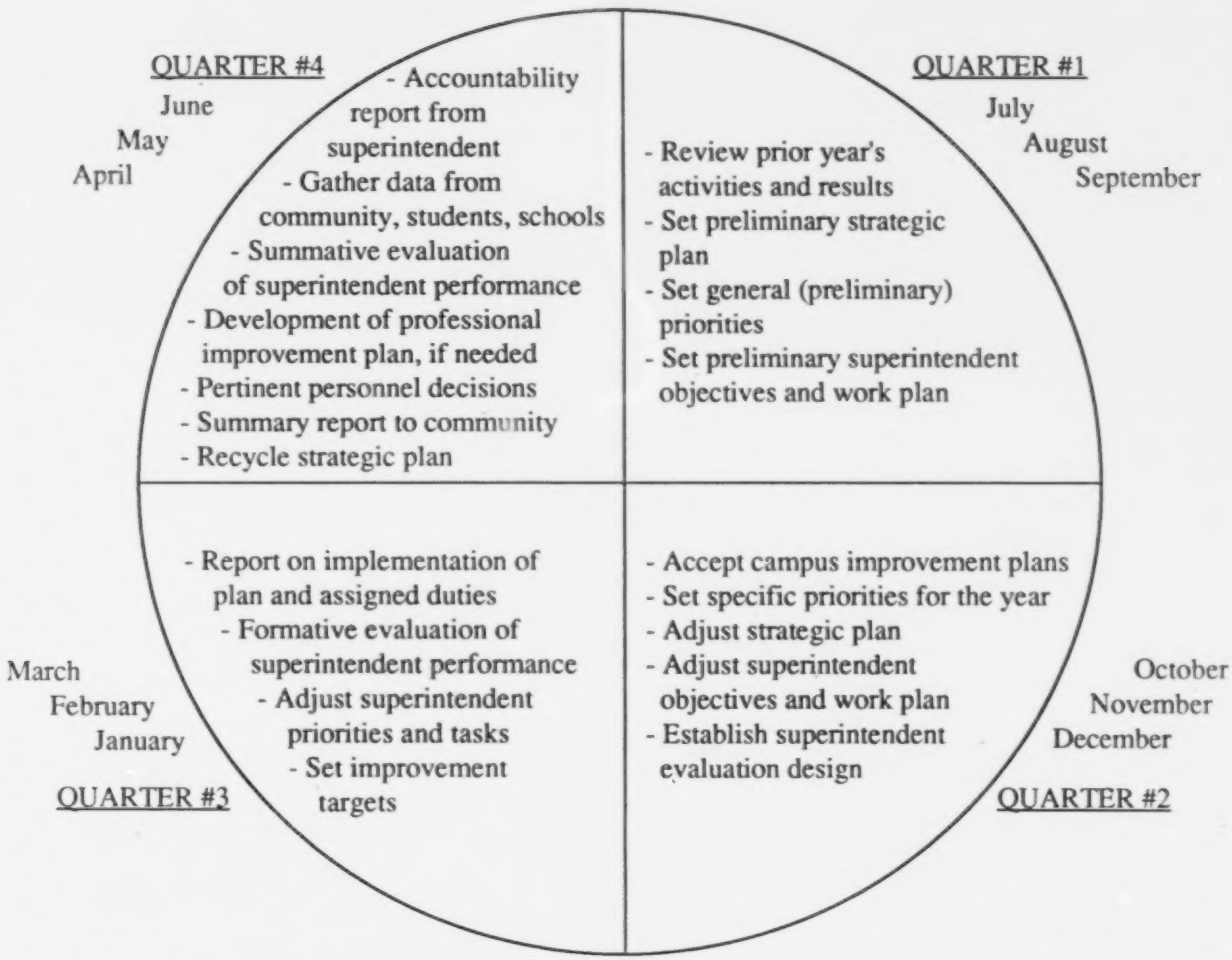
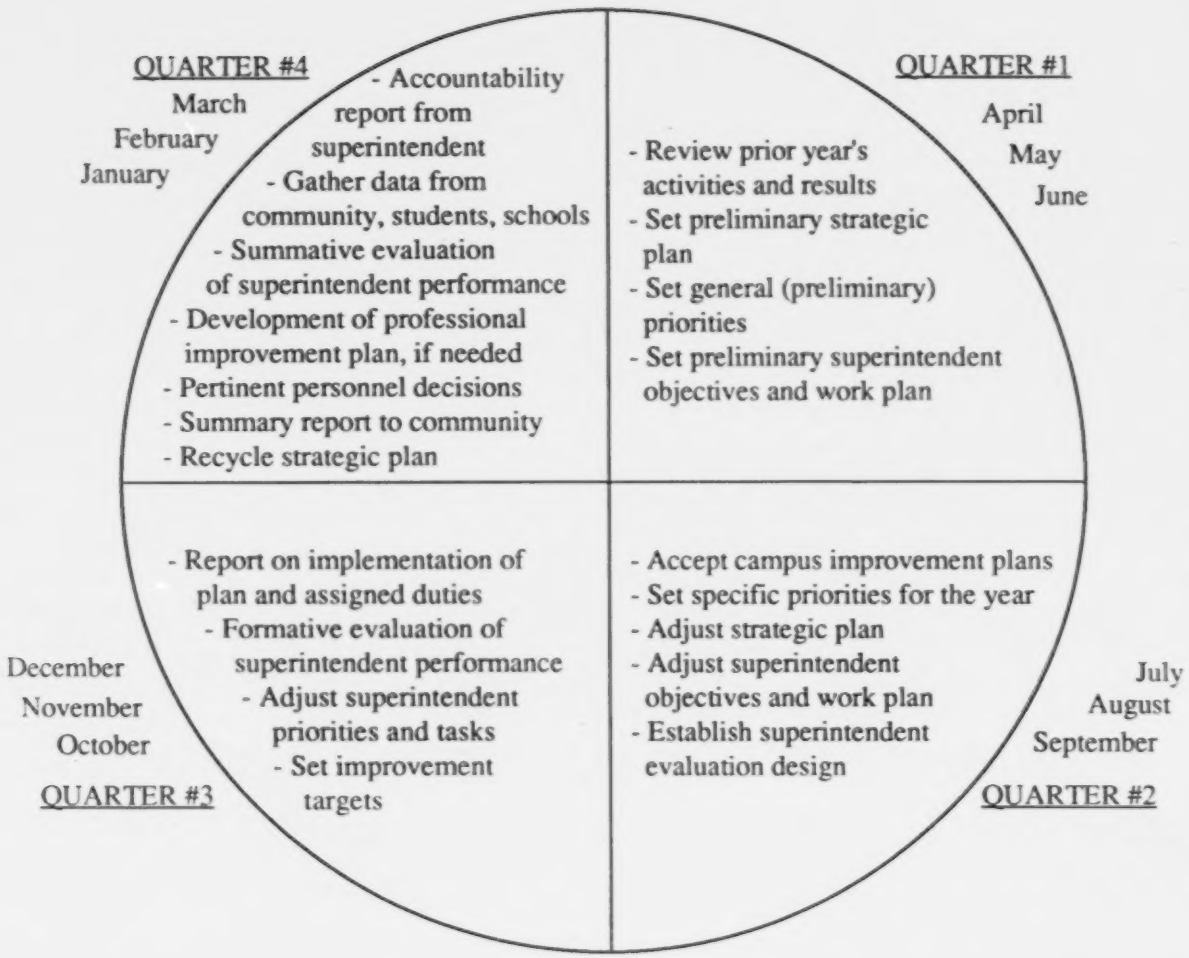


Figure 11

ANNUAL CALENDAR FOR SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD INTERCHANGE

Fiscal Year April 1 - March 31



of data about superintendent and district performance, in the context of district needs and pertinent constraints.

Main Superintendent/Board Performance Evaluation Activities in Each Quarter

As seen in Figures 10 and 11, evaluation of superintendent performance is only a part, although an important part, of superintendent/board interactions during the year. As the figures illustrate, it is important to functionally integrate superintendent performance evaluation into the regular flow of board/superintendent activities, so that evaluation facilitates rather than impedes their individual and collective work in behalf of the district.

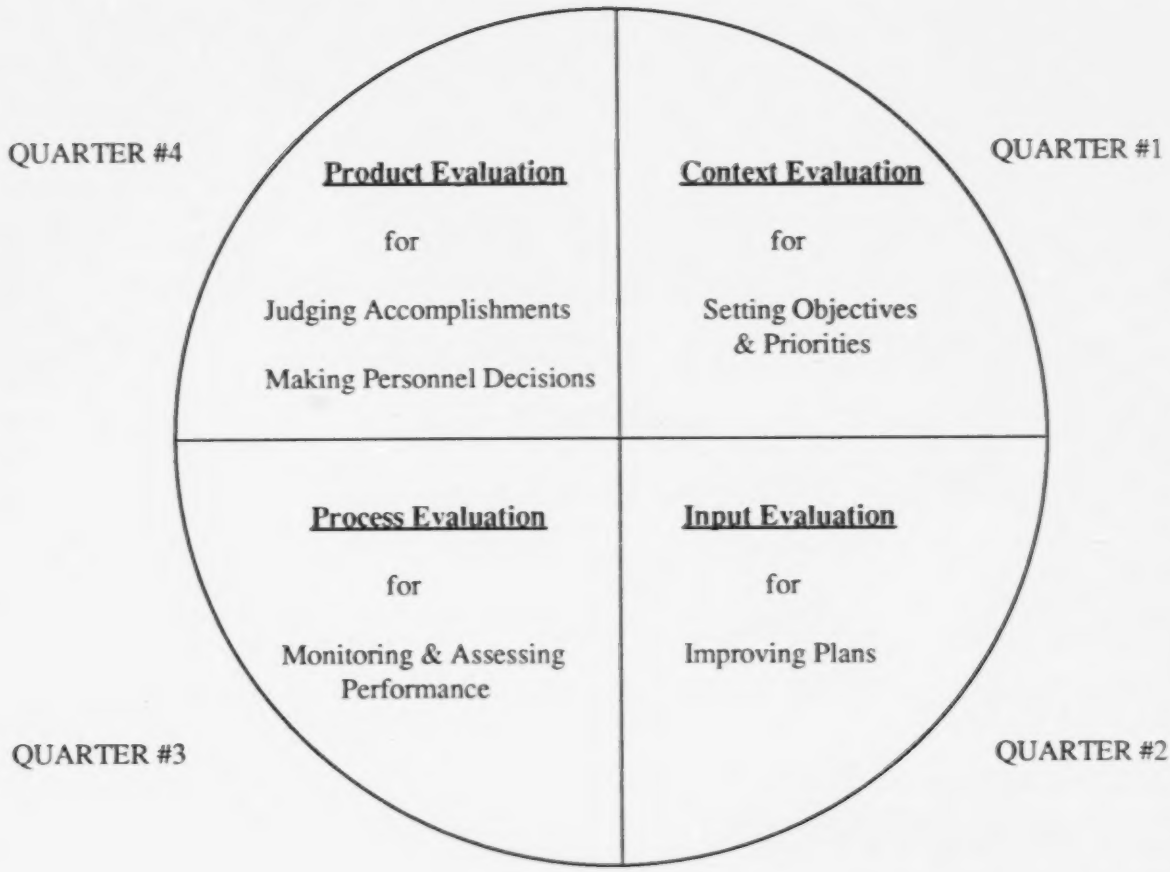
In order to study superintendent performance evaluation per se, it is useful to filter out nonevaluative activities in order to focus on the main superintendent performance evaluation activities in each quarter. Figure 12 is provided for this purpose.

As shown in the figure, during the first quarter the emphasis relating to superintendent evaluation is on Context Evaluation. The board and superintendent review the prior year's activities and results especially to identify unmet needs in both student accomplishments and district offerings. Review of context evaluation information is keyed to setting general priorities for the year and updating the district's strategic plan. Such review is useful to the board for defining the superintendent's main responsibilities and accountabilities for the year.

Figure 12

MAIN EVALUATION EMPHASIS

in Each Quarter



During the second quarter, the emphasis relating to superintendent evaluation is on Input Evaluation. The superintendent evaluates campus plans and provides feedback to schools for their use in improving the plans. The board and superintendent also review and adjust the strategic plan in light of the assessment of campus plans. Based on the adjusted strategic plan and the previously defined superintendent responsibilities and accountabilities, the board also establishes the design for evaluating superintendent performance during the remainder of the year, including intended uses and users, questions to be addressed in formative and summative evaluation reports, and data to be collected.

During the third quarter, the emphasis relating to superintendent evaluation is on Process Evaluation. The superintendent maintains a portfolio of information on the implementation of district plans and provides progress reports to the board. The board reacts to the reports by providing formative evaluation to the superintendent. The board and superintendent adjust priorities and plans as appropriate.

During the fourth quarter, the emphasis relating to superintendent evaluation is on Product Evaluation. Through the year the superintendent maintains a portfolio on accomplishments and provides an accountability report to the board. The board may gather additional data, e.g., judgments from the community, schools, and students. The board completes a summative evaluation of the superintendent's performance. The board may use the summative evaluation for any or all of the following purposes: make decisions on continuation/termination and salary; work with the superintendent to develop a professional improvement plan; report to the community; begin revision of the district's strategic plan.

As seen in the above discussion, the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation concepts correspond quite closely and differentially to what steps the board of education needs to take in each quarter in evaluating superintendent performance. Therefore, boards of education might find it useful to adopt the CIPP categories as the basic concepts for use in evaluating superintendent performance. The simplicity of these four concepts, at the general level, facilitates training new board members in the district's general approach to superintendent evaluation. The fact that each CIPP concept fits in a particular quarter of the school year provides a parsimonious scheme to guide evaluation of superintendent performance. Finally, context, input, process, and product evaluations are keyed to helping boards and educators to assess and take actions focused on meeting student and district needs.

Differentiating Board and Superintendent Responsibilities for Superintendent Performance Evaluation

In addition to sequencing evaluation tasks, it is also useful to define the individual and collective responsibilities of the superintendent and board for carrying out the evaluation work. Figure 13 is provided as a general guide to assigning such responsibilities, which include applying evaluative information as well as obtaining and reporting it. The responsibilities are differentiated by the collective efforts of the superintendent and board, plus the independent responsibilities of each. Also, the responsibilities are organized according to the quarter of the year when they must be conducted. Within each quarter, the listed responsibilities are numbered to indicate their approximate sequence. An underlying principle in the chart is differentiation of evaluation tasks, in accordance with the board's governance and policymaking authority and the superintendent's responsibilities for carrying out the board's directives. Essentially, the

Figure 13

EVALUATION-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD IN EACH QUARTER

	QUARTER #1	QUARTER #2	QUARTER #3	QUARTER #4
Superintendent and Board	1. Review Context Evaluation data 5. Discuss superintendent evaluation plan for the year	2. Discuss campus plans	3. Review progress in implementing plans (Process Evaluation)	3. Gather data from community, students, schools 6. Develop P.I.P. 8. Recycle strategic plan
Superintendent	3. Update strategic plan	1. Evaluate campus plans (Input Evaluation) 3. Adjust strategic plan	1. Maintain portfolio of key activities 2. Provide progress reports	1. Maintain portfolio of accomplishments (Product Evaluation) 2. Provide accountability report to Board
Board	2. Set general priorities 4. Approve strategic plan 6. Update superintendent duties	4. Approve revised strategic plan 5. Establish superintendent evaluation design	4. Formative evaluation of superintendent performance	4. Summative evaluation of superintendent performance 5. Personnel decisions 7. Report to community

superintendent provides advice and data to the board, and the board uses the input to evaluate superintendent performance and take appropriate follow-up actions. In addition, the board and superintendent jointly use the evaluative information to engage in collaborative strategic planning efforts. The chart should be self-explanatory in view of the description of tasks provided earlier in this section.

6. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Superintendent performance evaluations do not distinguish precisely between superintendent performance and district performance. This is appropriate and desirable. For the board and superintendent to get the most benefit from superintendent performance evaluation, they need to evaluate needs, plans, processes, and outcomes, keyed not just to improving the superintendent's performance of duties, but more fundamentally to improving school district functioning, especially student achievement. Since the superintendent is the district's chief executive officer, it is reasonable to key judgments of her/his performance to judgments of the functioning and achievements of the district as a whole. Of course the constraints in the setting must be taken into account, and the superintendent should not be held accountable for shortfalls not under her/his control.

Despite the brief section on implementation of superintendent performance evaluation, this paper has been largely theoretical. The model introduced in Section 4 and discussion of its implementation in Section 5 provide conceptual tools to guide both discussion and field work toward improving superintendent evaluation. I hope that interested parties will become involved

with CREATE in further examining and improving the concept and procedures of superintendent performance evaluation.

In its present form, school boards and other groups might find CREATE's draft superintendent performance evaluation model useful for several purposes:

- As a conceptual organizer for discussing the characteristics of sound superintendent evaluation systems
- As an experimental model to be adapted, operationalized, and tested
- As an overlay for developing a superintendent performance portfolio
- As a set of checklists for examining the completeness of an existing superintendent evaluation system
- As a guide to defining school district policy on superintendent evaluation
- As a template for school district committees to use in designing a new superintendent evaluation system

CREATE's research team needs feedback on the draft superintendent performance evaluation model in order to improve it and prepare it for field testing. We would welcome and use reactions and recommendations for improving the model. We would also like to hear from any groups with interest in participating in field tests of the model.

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